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THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF ISLAM IN SUDAN: NUMAYRI'S  
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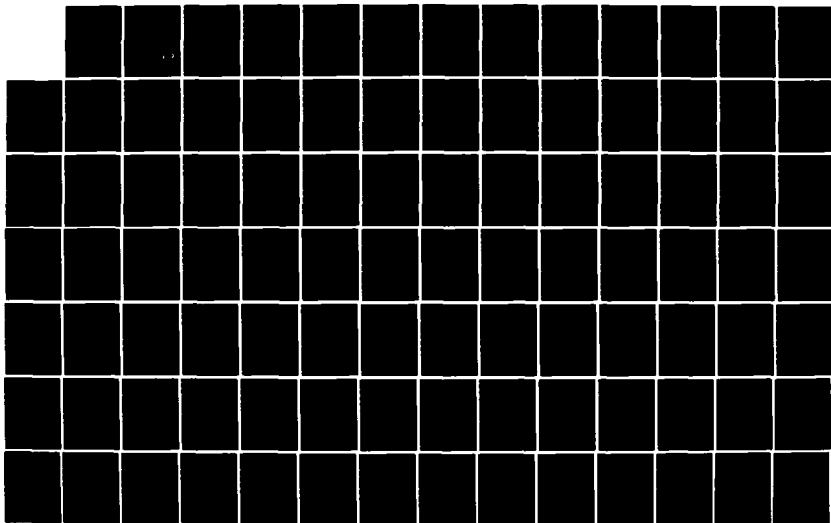
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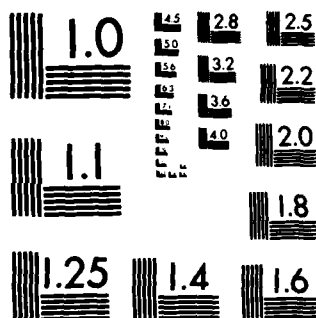
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THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF ISLAM IN SUDAN:  
NUMAYRI'S ISLAMIZATION PROGRAM.

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by  
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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

This research study deals with the general subject of the political impact of Islam in the Sudan through an analysis of the Islamization program recently initiated by President Ja'far Numayri. Part I provides a basic summary of the extended analysis. It provides general coverage of the more detailed analysis and is an outline of that analysis.

Part II presents the basic conclusions of the report in terms of general interpretations and implications for Sudanese and U.S. policy.

The more detailed analysis is presented in the final two sections of this report. These parts provided the expanded explanations for the points made in Part I of this presentation.

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NUMAYRI'S ISLAMIZATION PROGRAM IN THE SUDAN.  
by John O. Voll, University of New Hampshire

Since September 1983 there has been a highly visible program of Islamization in the Democratic Republic of the Sudan. This program appears to be the creation of the President of the Republic, Ja'far al-Numayri. At the same time, it is clear that many elements are involved in a policy re-orientation of this magnitude. Although many complex aspects are involved in trying to understand the Sudanese Islamization program more fully, many of the critical issues are summed up in considering a basic question:

Why did President Numayri initiate this program of Islamization now ?

PART I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

Each part of this question reflects an important dimension of the Islamization program in the Sudan. The different possible emphases of this simple question provide the basic structure for this report.

Why "now"?

First, it is important to put the recent policies in the context of the contemporary status of the Islamic world in general and Sudanese society in particular; that is, why was the program initiated now? This provides a concrete starting point for analysis. The interpretive question of the general "why?" is the basis for the conclusion of the analysis, after the specific aspects of the contemporary Sudanese experience are examined.

The modern development of the Sudanese political system, and the more general evolution of Sudanese society, provide the

essential foundations for the program. The growing role of the "state" as a social institution in the Sudan creates special conditions for Islamization. The traditions created by the nineteenth century Mahdist state, the experience of British rule, the weaknesses of party-parliamentary style governments, and the recent failures of more radical style programs have all contributed to opening the way for an authoritarian-populist effort in the 1980s to establish a clearly Islamic state and society. These trends in political institutions are supported by the broader evolution of Sudanese society where modernization opens the way for a more "fundamentalist" Islamic mood which contrasts as much with popular traditional religion as it does with modern secularism.

A further support for the emergence of this Islamization program in the 1980s is the general context of renewal and reform within the Islamic world as a whole. The complex phenomena that have come to be called the "Islamic Resurgence" have affected the mood and attitudes of Sudanese Muslims (and non-Muslims). It must be stressed, as many Sudanese Muslims do, that the Sudanese Islamization program is significantly different from other programs. However, Sudanese Islamization reflects "lessons" learned from the Iranian experience and other Muslim renewal efforts, and the Sudan cannot be seen in isolation from the broader world community of Muslims. The mood of resurgence in the Muslim world helps to re-enforce the spirit of Islamization in the Sudan, although the program was not the direct result of "foreign" elements at work within the Sudan.

### Why Numayri ?

A second aspect of the basic question involves the leadership in this Islamization initiative: Why did President Numayri, rather than some other group, initiate this program ? There have been many different Sudanese movements and groups who have attempted to provide ideological leadership for the country. It is a fact of considerable interest and importance that in the early 1980s it was Numayri and not some one else who has provided the leadership for a major ideological re-orientation of the political system (and also, because of the nature of the program, a re-orientation of social mood).

The idea of instituting an Islamic constitution or creating an Islamic state is not new in the Sudan. In historical terms, the Mahdist state of the nineteenth century provided a symbolic prototype and even non-Mahdists referred to that state as the first independent Sudanese state. In the days of parliamentary politics many of the parties proposed various forms of Islamization. However, in the years since Sudanese independence in 1956 there had been much talk but little concrete action in the area of Islamization.

The evolution of the political system and social structures seems to have opened the way for a possible Islamization program but it was not until Numayri acted that a thorough-going Islamization program was initiated. Islamization seemed to be more of an intellectual theme or ideological presentation rather than a basis for actual policies to be implemented. This implementation requires both the opportunity, that is, being in control of the political system, and the determination to take

the risks of beginning such a policy. Other groups advocating Islamization have in the past decades lacked one or the other of these characteristics, while Numayri has both in the early 1980s.

The new initiative came from the leadership already in power rather than from some revolutionary movement. The Sudanese Left has been in a position of great weakness since the mid-1970s. The failure of the Communist Left to seize power in 1971 resulted in the destruction of the Communist organization in the Sudan. The Arab Socialist Left provided intellectual inspiration for government policies for much of the 1970s but Sudanese/ Arab socialism did not produce an effective populist movement or mass mobilization organization. The Sudanese Socialist Union was not ineffective in providing support for government policies but neither the SSU nor the unorganized socialist left is in a position in the 1980s to provide policy initiatives of the magnitude of the recent changes. Thus, in the inventory of possible leaders, neither leftist opposition nor leftist supporters of the regime seem to represent strong alternatives to Numayri's leadership, whether socialist or Islamic.

The new orientation is Islamic not leftist. In the Sudan there is a long tradition of political support for creating a more visibly Islamic political system. Many prominent political groups and individuals have advocated some type of an Islamization program. It is possible to imagine scenarios in which some of these groups would provide the initiatives and inspirations for Islamization, working with the government of Numayri. One such scenario could have been the result of a



continuation of the process of national reconciliation begun in 1977-1978. This brought Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi into a position of working with Numayri. Sayyid Sadiq, his family, and the Mahdist movement as a whole have advocated Islamization. However, Sayyid Sadiq was in jail at the end of the summer of 1984. Sayyid Sadiq did not have a direct role in this Islamization program.

Similarly, the Muslim Brotherhood organization in the Sudan has long advocated Islamization of the Sudanese political system and society. One of the most prominent Sudanese Brotherhood leaders is Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, who has been a cabinet member and presidential adviser in recent years. However, although the Islamization program instituted in 1983 reflects a number of Brotherhood themes and ideas, the program, especially in terms of methods of implementation, is not fully the one advocated by the Muslim Brotherhood in the Sudan in recent years. Although the Brotherhood has supported the Islamization program of Numayri, it was Numayri and not the Brotherhood that initiated this program of Islamization. It is worth noting, however, that the Brotherhood program is an evolutionary one which Brotherhood leaders note has been in operation for some time. In this way, the Numayri program, while not strictly in accord with Brotherhood proposals, can be seen as a product of the previous work of the Brotherhood.

Other groups in the Sudan have also advocated Islamization of government and society. At times, for example, political organizations associated with the Khatmiyyah Tariqah and the Mirghani family have adopted platforms outlining Islamic constitutions or institutions. Similarly, Ismail al-Azhari and

parties which he led had strong Islamic planks in their political platforms. However, the traditional political parties of the early years of independence did not move beyond statements of support in principle. The current political heirs of these parties are in exile, in quiet opposition within the country, or have withdrawn from direct involvement in the political arena. Those in exile or opposition are vigorous in their opposition to Numayri's program while the non-political elements give quiet support or abstain from comment. In any case, these old advocates of some form of Islamization have not had a direct role in the initiation of the program in the early 1980s.

In addition to the traditional parliamentary parties, there are a number of smaller groups on the fringes of the political arena who have had some visibility in advocating various forms of Islamic programs. The best known is a group called the Republican Brothers led by Mahmud Muhammad Taha. Such groups have not been able to excite either mass support or substantial elite interest. They have had little if any role in the current situation.

In examining other possible sources of leadership for initiation of an Islamization program in the Sudan, it is important to note the nature of the more traditional Islamic leadership groups. In the Sudan there is not a significant ulama ( "mullah" or "clerical") class nor is there any dominating scholarly institution or great mosque-school complex. Thus there is no Sudanese equivalent for the student-teacher networks in Iran centered around great mosque-school centers like Qum. For this reason, conservative and traditional scholars have had no

real role in initiating or implementing the Islamization program in the Sudan.

Traditional Islamic leadership has come from a more complex grouping of "religious" figures. Local preachers and teachers have performed a wide variety of roles in the villages and towns of the Muslim areas of the Sudan. Notable "holy families" are the basic units for traditional Islamic leadership. The major families with "national" influence are the descendants of Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi and the Mirghani family (which provides leadership for the Khatmiyyah Tariqah). In addition to the major Sayyids and their families, there are many other families with prestige in their own localities. They maintain special traditions of devotions and reputations for piety and maintain significant influence within their own areas. The two major families have provided support for traditional parliamentary parties but the other families have played minor political roles. In the 1970s, while the Mahdi and Mirghani families had a relatively low political profile, members of other families gained some visibility through activities in developing administrative and political structures and also through the encouragement and respect given to them by President Numayri. In this context some observers have felt that the Islamization program may, at least in part, have been due to the influence of some of these families within the revolutionary regime. However, it seems that while they may have helped to increase the Islamic sensibilities of President Numayri and others, the "traditional Sufis" were not the source of the initiative or the content of the current Sudanese Islamization program.

The Islamization program appears, in fact, to have been initiated by President Numayri. He has not been acting as a front for other advocates of an Islamic program. The answer to the question of why it was Numayri and not some one else who implemented an Islamization program is the simple and obvious one: he was in power and had the authority and influence to set the program in motion. He also had the determination to do it and to complete the process rapidly. He had begun to participate more fully in Islamic activities in his own personal life. His experience with other possible policy orientations had been negative. By the early 1980s he had become persuaded that the Islamic path represented the best basis for Sudanese national policy. By the fall of 1983, in other words, he reflected a combination not found in any other group: he had the necessary intellectual or believing conviction, the will to take the risk of initiating Islamization, and was in a position of sufficient power to begin the actual implementation of the policy.

Other groups have had varying opportunities in the years since independence but they have failed to implement such a program. At some times it was judged politically unfeasible and at other times the determination was not strong enough. Islamization often became tangled with the problems of partisan factionalism and the early difficulties of creating a Sudanese national consensus. In the 1980s, the alternatives were not the full controllers of the political system nor were they in a position to lead a revolt against that system. As a result, when an Islamization program was initiated, it was done by Numayri

rather than other possible groups.

#### Why This Particular Program?

The third dimension of the basic question is an emphasis on the nature of the particular Islamization program: Why has Numayri initiated this program of Islamization now?

The resurgence of Islam in the 1970s shows that there are many different forms that Islamization can take. Islam is not a monotonous and simply monolithic entity and many different programs of Islamization have emerged. While in general principle, Muslims talk about "the Islamic alternative", there are, in fact, a number of models and alternatives visible within the contemporary world. These range from the Third Universal Theory presented by Mu'ammār Qaddafi in Libya to the more pragmatic and sometimes conservative mood of the fundamentalist monarchy in Saudi Arabia.

The Sudanese Islamization program is not based on intellectually radical assumptions. It also differs in some ways from the formulations presented by various thinkers in the tradition of the Muslim Brotherhood. In these presentations there is considerable scope given to using iitihad (independent analysis) in definition and application of Islamization programs. It is also worth noting that Numayri's Islamization program is not a nativistic affirmation of traditional Sudanese popular Islam. Instead, the program formally implemented in 1983-1984 adheres very closely to the standard formulations of the Shari'ah and does not depart to any significant extent from already accepted definitions. There is little evidence of iitihad and the basic efforts are directed toward simple implementation rather

than developing any special formulations. (The major exception to this is in the non-governmental sector: the development of Islamic banking in the Sudan has made many pioneering efforts. This has been supported by the development of appropriate laws but much of the effort is extra-governmental.)

The particular program reflects its initiator. Numayri's military background and general experience appears to have given him an appreciation of the direct approach. Existing Islamic law is being implemented. Intellectual reformulation efforts and independent analyses are, in this view, possibly interesting exercises but they may take more time than Numayri feels is available. The Islamization program is thus intellectually conservative but, in its starkness, becomes revolutionary in social and political terms. "This particular program" has been initiated because it reflects the mood and style of the leader who set it in motion. One might call this program "Islamization in the military mode," just as one might think of the current developments in Iran as "Islamization in the mullah mode."

## PART II. CONCLUSIONS & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of this general analysis, it is possible to draw certain conclusions about the basic nature of the Islamization program and what are the implications for policy, both within the Sudan and for the United States.

### The "General Why?"

Beyond the more specific issues of the timing, leadership, and nature of the Islamization program in the Sudan, there is the general interpretive question of "why?". This is related to the

broader evolution of Sudanese politics and society and builds on the concrete discussions of the question: "why now?" The current Sudanese experience provides a useful test case for broader explanations of the Islamic resurgence that have been presented in recent years. Some basic generalizations about the current Islamization policies appear to be valid, at least after one year of implementation and experimentation. These show the aspects which the Sudan shares with other contemporary Islamic areas and also point to significant divergences.

1. At least in its first year, the Islamization program in the Sudan does not appear to be the product of any significant anti-Western feelings, either among the intellectual elite or among the masses.

2. Similarly, the Islamization program has not emerged as being openly opposed to the United States or U.S. interests. On the contrary, the governmental leadership initiating the Islamization program is clearly identified, in the eyes of the public (both within and outside the Sudan), with the United States.

3. The Sudan is certainly a society in turmoil and the "modern secular state" model of government has been unable to cope with the problems faced by Sudanese state and society. However, the Sudanese Islamization program is not simply a response to basic crises of state and society. In addition, it seems to be part of the long-term historical evolution of state and society in the Sudan. It is a "logical next stage" as much as it is a response to specific recent conditions.

4. The Islamization program in the Sudan is neither a movement of militant opposition nor simply a manipulative control effort by the government. It combines some aspects of both of these and appears as an uneasy synthesis. However, this synthesis is authentic and should not be seen as being essentially a "cover" for some other motivation.

5. In many of these aspects, the program of the past year in the Sudan is not, strictly speaking, a fundamentalist program or a classic movement of ta'idid (renewal). The absence of open militancy and the limited use of ijtihad distinguish it from contemporary fundamentalist and renewalist movements. It is, in many ways, a continuation of the process of the Islamization of Sudanese society with special adaptations to the conditions of the modernizing contemporary world.

6. Examination of the situation in the Sudan provides a strong reminder that in analyzing the reasons for the initiation of a program of Islamization, it is important not to ignore the personal, individual element. Long term historical continuities, general class orientations and desires, sociologically defined forces and group motivations, institutional and social structural crises, and other general factors are significant.

However, the fact that the Islamization program in the Sudan was initiated by a particular individual leader also shapes the nature of that program. President Numayri is a former soldier with a flair for the dramatic. He appears at times to be impatient with details and sometimes finds extensive intellectual discussions and deliberative committees to be time-wasting diversions. These characteristics have influenced the mode of



implementation to a substantial degree.

The personality of President Numayri also has had an impact on the content of the program. An important reason for the initiation of the Islamization program appears to be the growing conviction on the part of Numayri that the Islamic path is the right and most effective policy path for his country to follow. He has had direct experience with a variety of other approaches, ranging from the radical leftist mood of the early days of the May Revolutionary regime to the more moderate secularism of the mid-1970s. All of these have left their mark upon Numayri's vocabulary and political repertoire but none have seemed either personally satisfactory or politically effective on the long run. As an increasingly practicing Muslim, Numayri would be ready by the early 1980s to adopt a more clearly Islamic course and he has been in a position to take the Sudan officially with him.

A similar consideration must be given to other Sudanese leaders, both in the government and in opposition. Educated Sudanese Muslims have in recent years as individuals become more actively and visibly Muslim in their daily lives. Whatever their views of the particular Islamization program and the means of its implementation, there is a personal dimension of faith which leads them not to reject the principle of Islamization as a whole.

In this context, one answer to the question of "why?" is that many of the Sudanese Muslims who are the majority in the country are now ready for a program of more rigorous implementation of Islamic beliefs and rules. This is not simply

because of general societal crises or historical continuities. It is also the product of the development of individual faith among Sudanese Islamic believers.

#### Policy Implications:- For the Sudan

The various answers to the basic question of "Why did President Numayri initiate this program of Islamization now?" involve certain implications for Sudanese policy makers. The basic political style of Ja'far Numayri has been one utilizing a careful balancing of forces. In many ways Numayri's abilities in this action have been critical for the survival of the May Revolutionary Regime and his own leadership. Despite the plots and conspiracies, Numayri has brought remarkable political stability to the Sudanese political scene.

The basic policy question raised by the Islamization program is whether or not this represents a departure from the previous compromise-and -balancing style of leadership. In answering this it is useful to remember that Numayri made good use of the dramatic action and coopting policy reversal as tactics for maintaining the government in unsettled times. In the first year of the revolution, Numayri both adopted a radical program and began the destruction of the Sudanese Communist Party, which was his strongest threat from the left. When the SCP showed itself ultimately unwilling to cooperate with the government, it was destroyed. The opposition of the Mahdists to the revolutionary government was met by strong force and then reconciliation and this was the case with the Muslim Brotherhood. Within the framework of politics in the Muslim north, the Islamization program has the effect of providing a vehicle for bringing

potential Islamic revolutionaries into the circles of leadership while pre-empting their ability to develop, if they chose to, an independent revolutionary alternative. The Islamization program has brought one of the most powerful contemporary political themes into Numayri's political repertoire and, because of his own personal development, it seems more natural (and thus more effective) than the old leftist radicalism.

The major problem with the Islamization program is its apparent impact on national unity. Numayri's strongest political allies among the southern leaders have openly opposed the Islamization program. Vice President Joseph Lagu has joined forces with his former southern rival (and former Vice President) Abel Alier in an effort to halt the process of Islamization.

However, while many observers note the southern opposition, it may not have been as important a factor as it might have been. At least a year before the formal implementation of Shari'ah law, southern opposition groups had begun open opposition to Numayri's government. People were already reporting that the "war in the South" had resumed even before Islamization was an issue. In that context, southern opposition to Numayri may have been a factor in persuading Numayri to initiate the Islamization program when he did. This order of events and motivations is more in accord with the political chronology than an analysis which sees the Islamization program as "causing" the Southern opposition. It is southerners like Lagu who have been put in impossible positions by the new program but, as of late summer 1984, these people had not completely cut their ties with Numayri.

It would appear that the Islamization program has not reduced Numayri's ability to check and balance groups in the Sudan so much as it has shifted the center of gravity of the supportive political system away from the southern support which had been important in the mid-1970s but appeared to be less reliable with the outbreak of new fighting in the early 1980s. The shift has been in a direction which pre-empts some of the potential for militant Islamic opposition groups and provides the basis for building a stronger foundation for popular support in the north.

If Numayri continues to work within the "balance and co-opt" mode, one should expect to see a continued commitment to Islamization but some efforts to reestablish some southern support for the regime. This could take the form of refining and reformulating the Islamic legal structure that is now in place and a more clearly stated definition of the autonomy of the south within the new legal and constitutional framework.

#### Policy Implications: For the United States

The Islamization program, in the form that it has taken, also has some implications for United States' policies. In the first place, the U.S. should not fear or oppose the Islamization policies simply because they are "Islamization policies." Some people suggest that movements of Islamic revival are inherently anti-U.S. The first year of the Sudanese policy does not seem to bear this out.

However, it is true that people who initiate Islamization programs are sensitive to what could be seen as "foreign" pressures which attempt to divert or subvert the effort to create

a state and society in accord with the principles and teachings of the Islamic faith. In this context the United States must use special care in dealing with the leaders of the Sudan. Pressure that is too strong could have an adverse impact. If Sudanese leaders feel that they are being forced to choose between Islamization (in any form) and American friendship and support, they will have no choice. Even those who are most sympathetic toward the United States will have to make at least a public choice in favor of Islam.

Another implication of this analysis for U.S. policy is that while Islamization appears to be a major reorientation of policy in domestic terms, it has not done much to change the orientation of Sudanese foreign policy. That policy remains based on an awareness of potential threats from Libya and Ethiopia and the advantages of good relations with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United States. If this changes it is more likely to be the product of changes taking place outside the Sudan than it is to result from domestic Islamization.

Finally, the United States has become quite closely identified with President Numayri and his government. This type of situation always raises the question of whether or not such close ties are wise on the long run. The Islamization policy does not seem to have weakened Numayri significantly in the Sudan. His strengths and weaknesses remain largely what they were in the years when the close U.S.-Sudanese ties were being forged. If it was strategically important for the U.S. to work closely with Numayri in the late 1970s, it remains so in the mid-1980s.

Like any major leader, Numayri could be killed or die suddenly. There does not seem to be an obvious and influential successor but, in the absence of a major revolution, it seems likely that the constitutional procedures would place a leader in the post of president and normal governmental functions would continue.

Barring the possibility of sudden death, there seem to be few effective alternatives to the May Revolutionary Regime of Ja'far Numayri. For the time being, the Islamization program has preempted potential Islamic opposition movements, the traditional parties are disorganized and without prominent leaders at this time, southern opposition is regionally restricted and does not have the potential for capturing the government in Khartoum. The recently formed "National Salvation Front" of opposition groups in exile brings together such diverse groups that it may be hard for them to coordinate their efforts effectively.

In this context, it might be unwise to put too great a distance between the United States and Numayri. It is not clear that any of the opposition groups would be any more friendly toward the United States and it is likely that they would be less able to cope with the continuing problems of the Sudan than Numayri seems to have been able to do. Even though there are significant figures in opposition, like Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi, it should not be forgotten that Numayri now has the support of much of the Muslim Brotherhood, a major member of the Mahdi family, and a remarkable number of the local Islamic leaders in the northern Sudan. While this does not guarantee that he will remain in office, it at least indicates that he is not simply all alone

in the political wilderness waiting to be overthrown. He has provided the Sudan with more than fifteen years of continuity in leadership. Those years have been filled with problems and crises but his record remains better than any other leadership group in the history of the independent Sudan.

### PART III. ISLAMIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS: WHY "NOW"?

The modern development of the Sudanese political system and the general evolution of Sudanese society provide the specific context for President Numayri's Islamization program. In addition, the general context of renewal and reform within the broader Islamic world provides at least a supportive background for the current programs in the Sudan. The longterm social and political developments in these contexts for Islamic action provide an essential foundation for understanding why the Islamization program was initiated in the Sudan in the 1980s.

For many people the concrete implementation of Shari'ah law in the Sudan during 1983-1984 came as a surprise. It appeared to be an abrupt departure from the politics of balancing factions and compromise that has characterized Numayri's actions since the early 1970s. Although the Islamization program does represent a significant reorientation of policies, the program also can be seen as a further stage in some long term developments in the political system and social order in the Sudan.

To understand the lines of continuity which merge in the Islamization program of the early 1980s, it is helpful to look at some particular aspects of the social and political evolution of

the modern Sudan. The first is the changing nature of the state and the changing nature of the relations of Islamic elements with the state and the specific aspects of the modern Sudanese political experience that contributed to opening the way for the particular Islamization program that emerged; and the second is the relationship between modernization and Islamic "fundamentalism" in the Sudan.

#### ISLAM AND THE STATE IN THE MODERN SUDAN.

In the past two centuries there has been a significant evolution of both state and Islamic structures in the Sudan. Their interaction in changing circumstances has been an important dimension of modern Sudanese history. The long-term development has not been a smooth process. There have been periods of gradual change which have then been interrupted by major historical episodes which have changed the relationships between the state and major Islamic structures. In this development, whatever the extent of the transformation or social trauma, both Islam and the emerging state structures have continued to play a significant role.

#### Sudanese Islamic Structures.

There is a significant diversity within Muslim life and experience in the Sudan. For purposes of discussing why an Islamization program was initiated in the 1980s, it is useful to examine certain specific structures that have emerged within Islamic life in the Sudan. Three important types of Islamic structures have emerged in Sudanese history and these reflect special modes of interaction with state structures.

State-Ignoring Structures. In the area that is now included



within the borders of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, Islam arrived as a social ordering force before there were significant and autonomous state structures. As a result, there is a social foundation of Islamic attitudes and structures which emerged without direct reference to large scale state structures. This early foundation was created by itinerant merchants and Arab tribal groups who came to the Sudan in the era before the sixteenth century. (See Hasan, 1967, chapter 6.)

In much of the Sudan before the sixteenth century there was little non-tribal government. Ancient empires and early medieval kingdoms had disintegrated. In this context, Islamic life centered around local teachers and holy men associated with tribal life. Like the economy and society in which they developed, these Islamic structures may be thought of as "subsistence-level" groupings. They were self-sustaining and largely self-contained. They developed without reference to more formal state structures.

The heart of this structure was the local Islamic figure whose origins may have been from "the outside" but who soon was integrated into his local surroundings. He performed functions of social mediation, miracle working, healing, and providing a rudimentary instruction in Islam. In the Sudan this local teacher is called a faki, the central figure in early Islamic life in the Sudan. (Trimingham, 1949, chapter 5.)

This "state-ignoring" or "subsistence-level" Islam is a clear manifestation of what many people have called popular Islam. It is not careful about scholarly distinctions and is

often unaware of many important aspects of the Islamic tradition. It includes many customs and beliefs which would not be accepted by an informed Muslim and has made many compromises with local pre-Islamic and non-Islamic ways of life. It is, at the same time, a basic socio-religious substratum for life in the Muslim community.

State-complementing Structures. The second style of Islamic structures in the Sudan is the product of the further development of Islamic society in the Sudan. By the sixteenth century teachers with more formal background and understanding of Islam began to emerge as important figures in Islamic society. In the rural areas these men were not totally different from the fikis of the tribes. The teachers also performed many of the functions of popular religion. However, in addition to this, they established small schools and centers of Islamic life that were more clearly supratribal than the minor fiki's establishments. Often these teachers saw themselves as bringing the light of the Qur'an to people who were still ignorant, even though they might call themselves Muslims.

The characteristic organization of these teacher-fikis was based on the leadership of a "holy family," with the physical center often being the tomb of a famous pious ancestor. These domed tombs became and remain a major part of the landscape of the Muslim Sudan. The holy families had ties with tribes and other inhabitants of their areas through the educational programs and they often attracted students from many different areas. In addition, the family was usually associated with some particular tradition of devotional exercises which provided the basis for

regular gatherings and ceremonies for followers. In formal terms, these devotional traditions were the various Sufi orders (or tariqahs) and the regular ceremonies were the characteristic popular Sufi dhikrs.

Before the last part of the eighteenth century, the tariqahs provided common rituals but were not a focus for regionwide organization. Thus, families and tomb centers associated with the Qadiriyyah Tariqah were numerous but that did not mean that the tariqah itself was an organizational or structural force in the Sudan. The families with their tomb centers were self-contained units with broader ties through wandering scholars and students.

By the end of the eighteenth century a new type of tariqah was coming to the Sudan. In the Islamic world as a whole there was a growing sense of a need for socio-moral reconstruction within the Islamic community. Often teachers dedicated to the goal of meeting that need created reformist organizations that took the form of a tariqah. In some areas of the Islamic world these Neo-Sufi orders took a militant form and initiated holy wars in order to establish Islamic states. However, in the Sudan the new style orders continued the teaching traditions rather than engaging in holy wars.

The teachers and tariqah leaders of both the old and the Neo-Sufi type, created structures which were autonomous. At the same time, they developed in the era (beginning in the sixteenth century) of the emergence of comparatively effective and large scale political institutions. In the central Sudan this took the form of the development of the Funj Sultanate. The school-tomb

centers, the tariqah leaders, and the major holy families did not oppose the new state structures and often cooperated with the new rulers. They received land grants from the new rulers and acted as mediators in disputes. In this way the relatively autonomous structures and organizations of this type of Muslim leader cooperated with the emerging state structures and often were complementary to them. While individual saintly figures could disagree with individual ruler's actions, the tomb-teacher-tariqah complex tended to be state supporting in its mode of operation.

Alternative State Mode. A third important mode emerged later in the Islamic history of the Sudan. This is the state-creating mode which emerged in its clearest form in the movement of Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi who established an Islamic state in the Sudan in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Within the Islamic tradition there is the expectation that at some point in human history a truly Islamic society and community will be established. Because the message of Islam applies to all aspects of life, such a society would involve the creation of political structures which would be explicitly Islamic. Throughout Islamic history there have been movements to create fully Islamic alternatives to the existing state and social structures. Thus, in addition to structures which are state-ignoring and others which complement existing state structures, there are also modes of operation which represent the attempt to create an alternative, and more clearly Islamic, political system.

"Alternative state" programs can characteristically take two

general forms. One of these stresses the "fundamentals" of the message of Islam. The focus of the effort becomes a program of re-n~~e~~wal and re~~f~~orming society on the basis of those fundamentals. In a literal sense, this "alternative state" mode is a message-centered fundamentalism. The other form focuses upon the special guidance of God given to a leader who can fulfill messianic expectations within the Islamic community. The figure is often referred to as "the Mahdi." In its mahdist form, the alternative state mode tends to be leader and personality oriented. (Voll, 1982 b.)

In the Sudan the "alternative state" mode has taken a special form. Although Muhammad Ahmad in many ways seems like a classical charismatic figure (Dekmejian and Wyszomirski, 1972), he shares many features with more clearly message-oriented fundamentalists in the Islamic tradition. (Voll, 1979.) This Mahdist style involves the effort to create a state, with the necessary corollary being that the existing state system is to be opposed or at least significantly altered in the process. This oppositional role may be modified or softened but it is always implicit in the Mahdist mode, as long as the state is not acceptably Islamic to the Mahdist believers.

These three types of structures provide the institutional framework for the Muslim communities in the Sudan. While it is useful to make clear distinctions among them for analysis, it should, of course, be remembered that they are interacting parts of the social order. The styles represent degrees of emphasis rather than clearly separated categories. The dividing line

between the fiki, the teacher-saint, and the Mahdist is not absolute. Many individuals and groups show the overlapping nature of these categories. Despite this, these categories are useful because they represent differing modes of relationship between Islamic structures and the developing state structures in the Sudan. The evolution of these relationships provides a broader perspective for seeing why an Islamization program was initiated in the early 1980s.

#### **Stages of State Development.**

In the Sudan over the past two centuries there has been a gradual but important development of the state itself. This provides the context for the changing interactions between the political institutions and the three types of Muslim structures in the Sudan. As a result, it is important to outline the critical stages in the development of state structures in the Sudan.

In this context, a state is taken to be a set of institutions for societal management which is concentrated in central organizations that are broader than single primordial or kinship groupings. In addition, a state implies some degree of concentration of the means of physical coercion in the hands of the central organizations and also some degree of awareness among the people of the society of a "common sense of identity which utilizes a generally accepted vocabulary of legitimacy and identifies the central institutions with the common group identity." (Voll, 1983, p. 4)

During ancient and early medieval times in the Sudan there

had been some relatively large scale states with complex administrative structures. However, these disintegrated in later medieval times and the Sudan became an area with minimal state structures. It was in this era that Islam began to be a dominant force in the northern Sudan.

The Funj Sultanate. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a new state emerged and came to control much of the area now in the modern northern Sudan. The state, the Funj sultanate, was never very tightly centralized in structure and tribes and regional notables maintained a high degree of local autonomy. However, there was some recognizable degree of concentration of control in the hands of the Funj elite.

During the eighteenth century the cohesion of the sultanate began to be undermined. Tribal and regional groups passed out of the control of the central army and the central organizations themselves were divided by internal power conflicts. However, the end of the Funj state came as the result not of simple disintegration or internal revolt. The Sudan was invaded and conquered, in the 1820s, by the armies of Ottoman Egypt.

The Turco-Egyptian State. The invading armies were the forces of Muhammad Ali, the Ottoman governor of Egypt who ruled his province virtually independently. Muhammad Ali had begun a program of modernizing reform in Egypt and his administrators brought at least some of the new techniques with them. The Funj state was replaced by an administrative structure that was no longer "traditional" in format. In more general terms, the nineteenth century saw the development of state structures in the Sudan that imposed a more centralized control than had been

previously possible. While there were still militarily effective groups within the Turco-Egyptian Sudan, there was a greater centralization of coercive force than in the Funj era. Despite the "foreign" nature of the government, the growing centralization of control began the process of defining people ruled from Khartoum with a common identity. In this sense, there was an emerging "Sudanese state."

The nineteenth century Turco-Egyptian regime was the starting phase of the centralization of power and societal management in the modern Sudan. There were attempts to create countrywide administrative, financial, and military structures. There was also a major effort to reduce the ability of local groups to maintain autonomous military forces. In all of these aspects, the Turco-Egyptian rulers were only minimally successful and the costs were very high. The control efforts came to rely increasingly on coercion and the calibre of administrative officials was low, giving rise to many complaints. Despite the relative ineffectiveness of the Turco-Egyptian regime and the fact that it was overthrown by a massive popular uprising in the 1880s, the regime did create a tradition of centralized government which has not disappeared. To a large extent, Egyptian claims and conquests defined what has become the modern Sudan. One might say that the Turco-Egyptian rulers created a momentum for centralized state structures which has been maintained since the Egyptian conquests in the 1820s.

The Mahdiyyah. The Turco-Egyptian regime was succeeded by another regime that worked to create and maintain centralized



state control in the Sudan. This is the Mahdist state which was created as a result of the popular messianic movement of Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi which overthrew Egyptian rule in the Sudan by 1885. The organizing principle of this new state was very different: it was based on the goal of creating a truly Islamic state under the leadership of the divinely-guided leader. In structural terms, however, the centralized administration did not differ greatly from the Turco-Egyptian state.

Twentieth Century State Systems. The Mahdist state was brought to an end in 1898 when an Anglo-Egyptian army conquered the Sudan. A new state was established which in legal terms was an "Anglo-Egyptian Condominium" but in practical terms was a system of British rule. The new government, like the preceeding ones, was centralized in concept and had the power and resources to impose that centralization throughout the Sudan. In some areas this involved major military campaigns over long periods of time, but central governmental control was finally established. In this way, the "Anglo-Egyptian" government can be seen as a culmination of the state creating evolution that had begun centuries earlier with the establishment of the Funj sultanate.

The independent Sudan inherited this tradition and structure. The Sudanese government since 1956 has faced many challenges and the state has taken different forms: a parliamentary government in 1956-1958 and 1964-1969, a socially conservative military regime in 1958-1964, and the May Revolutionary regime with its changing emphases from radical leftist to the current Islamic form. However, despite the different forms and challenges, the administrative structure of

the state has been maintained, there has been a developing sense of "the Sudan" which is associated with the state, and the state has maintained the most powerful means of coercion in the country, even though it has not been able to create a state monopoly of military power.

In the past one hundred and sixty years there has been a strong historical continuity in terms of the development of the structures of a centralized state. Before the 1980s, there have been five state patterns -- Turco-Egyptian, Mahdist, "Anglo-Egyptian", pre-revolutionary independence, and the May Revolutionary regime. In terms of structures these five can be seen as a developing continuum in many ways.

State Self-Identification. These governments were significantly different, however, in terms of self-identification and justification for rule. Both the Turco-Egyptian and the Anglo-Egyptian regimes were foreign in that the ultimate center of policymaking power was outside of the Sudan. They were identified as parts of a broader imperial state system. They justified their rule on the grounds of the interests of the imperial state while making some effort to relate those interests to the welfare of the ruled in the Sudan. The Mahdist state was Sudanese in personnel but it also was based on a system in which, in principle, the ultimate center of policy making power was outside of the Sudan, since God is the ultimate sovereign. It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that a Sudanese state was created in which sovereign policy making power was located inside the Sudan, both in theory and in

practice.

Following the principles of the British rulers and the expectations of Western-oriented modernization, the independent Sudanese state was a secular state with the goal of becoming a secular, "modern" nation state. The emergence of a state system with this self-identification and justification represented a major stage in the development of the state within the Sudan. It represented, however, a political system that had difficulty in adapting itself to the Sudanese context.

It is often said of countries like the Sudan that the initial parliamentary system of the first years of independence failed because the local people were somehow "not ready for democracy." This may miss a key issue. Tribal and local traditions were open to relatively democratic concepts of consultation, consensus, and participation in the political processes, even though the specific parliamentary forms may have been unfamiliar. It may be that what the people were "not ready for" was a self-consciously secular government which made a virtue in principle of being religiously neutral and objective rather than concerned with morality. A variety of parliamentary and non-parliamentary regimes have failed in the Sudan since independence and one common element in all the diversity was that these regimes maintained the basic identification of a secular state striving to become a secular nation state.

By the end of the 1970s, for a variety of reasons, secularism no longer had its earlier appeal. The way was open and people were receptive to the idea of a state based on religious principles rather than the secularist ideal. Thus, while the long term

development of state structures seems to be relatively continuous in terms of creating centralized structures of social management and power, the popular expectations, even among the policy-making elite, were changing. These long term developments provide the basis for the evolution of the relations between Islam and the state in the Sudan.

#### Interaction of State and Islam

Relations between Islamic institutions and state structures are not inherently either cooperative or combatative. They depend, rather, on the dynamics of the particular context and the continuities with past interactions. Even though the state structures may not be clearly Islamic, it is still possible for Muslim institutions and groups to interact cooperatively with the state. Similarly, a state that is clearly based on a particular Islamic approach may find itself in conflict with some Islamic structures. The degree of cooperation or tension depends upon the nature of the state and Islamic structures involved.

Popular Islam and the State. The self-sustaining and state-ignoring Islamic structures in the Sudan have declined significantly in their influence and importance in the Sudan. As the power and functions of the state grew, the ability of local fikis and their followers to live lives untouched by the state has almost disappeared.

One of the best discussions of the modern status of state-ignoring popular Islamic structures appears in a short story by the Sudanese author Tayeb Salih called "The Doum Tree of Wad Hamid." A man in a village is telling a visitor about the village

and its experiences. The heart of the village is a tomb with a great doum tree. This is the center of devotional and daily life. There is no great teacher or holy family, just the tomb of Wad Hamid and the great doum tree. According to the narrator in the story, people come to the village from time to time with plans for new things like a ferry landing or an agricultural scheme, but the people prefer their own tree (and their old way of life).

The view of government of the state-ignoring Islamic institutions of the Sudan is clearly stated in the words of Tayeb Salih's narrator in this story:

"You remember that some years ago we had Members of Parliament and political parties and a great deal of to-ing and fro-ing which we couldn't make head or tail of. The roads would sometimes cast down strangers at our very doors...Though not a single one of them prolonged his stay beyond one night, they would nevertheless bring us the news of the great fuss going on in the capital...Two years passed without our knowing what form the government had taken, black or white. Its emissaries passed through our village without staying in it, while we thanked God that He saved us the trouble of putting them up. (Salih, 1969, p. 15).

This fictional account names in a clear manner the basic challenges to this popular Islamic substratum of Sudanese society: The improvements in communications and transportation, the growing ability of the government to provide services for such villages and the growing power of the government to persuade

such villages to accept those services. The ability of popular Islamic structures to ignore government has largely disappeared. In some form or another, the existence of the government needs to be noted.

Governmental encroachments on this style of Islamic life began as soon as effective state structures emerged. However, in the early eras, under the Funj, governmental functions were limited and the local fikis were largely unrestricted. Only at times were they even brought under the influence of the emerging class of teacher-saints and holy families. Similarly, under Turco-Egyptian rule, local fikis were unhindered so long as their activities did not threaten stability or governmental functions.

The first major effort to alter the role of the state-ignoring fiki came as a result of Mahdist efforts to eliminate non-Islamic practices. The Mahdi and his successor, the Khalifah Abdallahi, proscribed the making and distribution of religious amulets and other popular customs. In addition, fikis in the villages and among the tribes were contacted with the command to give allegiance to the Mahdi. Because of the vast distances in the Sudan and the limited resources available to the state, this program of controlling the fikis had only limited success. However, a major step had been taken in the process of reducing the influence of this type of Islamic structure.

While the Mahdists attempted to control the fikis in the name of purification of Muslim society, the British and the secularist independence governments continued the process in the name of "modernization" or, more colorfully, "eliminating

superstitions." They were aided in this process by the major religious leaders who hoped to integrate these local figures into the networks of their schools, tariqahs, and later, political parties.

Local customs and popular religious habits were resistant to this change but had few effective resources to maintain this lifestyle. Just as the very existence of a market and cash economy changes the nature of subsistence economies which it contacts, so, too, the very existence of state structures which cannot be ignored makes a "state-ignoring," self-sustaining popular religious life style impossible. At minimum, a normally active and adaptive, if "primitive", mode of life becomes consciously conservative and resists changes.

This basic substratum of Islamic structures has developed in a number of different directions. The basic, relatively conservative, response has been to provide the minimum required recognition of state actions and hope that the state, like the government officials in Tayeb Salih's story, will get tired and leave the village in peace. As long as the effective power of the state was limited at the local level, this response was possible and this was the case through most of the nineteenth century and even into the twentieth.

There are a growing number of times, however, when the state is in a position to demand more than this, at least from selected village and tribal groups. In the past local fikis were able to mobilize open resistance to incorporation into the broader state system. Men like Abu Jummayzah led revolts against the demands of the Mahdist state and there were numerous fiki-led revolts

against the British in the first two decades of the twentieth century. (Ibrahim, 1979) This resistance to the state took the form of advocating an alternative state system, usually of a messianic sort, and in this way the resistance itself changed the nature of the resisting Islamic structures. In such a movement the fiki had to become a mahdi and operate in very different ways. This response was not a major threat to the development of the centralized state in the Sudan and by the 1930s such revolts cease to be even a minor factor in maintaining law and order.

On the long run, modern governmental intervention in local communities displaces the minor fiki. The building of schools and medical clinics, the more effective operation of provincial police and a judicial system, and many other features of modernizing governments have take over many of the traditional functions of the minor fiki.

Even the spiritual and faith functions are often in the hands now of the teacher-saint class which has greater resources and is better able to function cooperatively with the government. Many minor fiki have adjusted by "graduating" to this higher status, creating organizations which are state-complementing. Their traditional role is transformed when they sponsor a medical clinic or an expanded school in their village or tribe.

Contemporary Heritage of the Old-style Fiki. Even in the most isolated areas of the northern Sudan it is clear that the old subsistence and self-sustaining social structures are rapidly disappearing. The earlier responses of ignoring state intrusions or revolting against them are beyond the local resources now in



most cases.

Although these structures are dying, they leave an important legacy. The fiki represented a life style in which issues of faith, belief in the transcendent God, and the constant Divine involvement in human life applied to all aspects of life. Crops, health, fertility, familial happiness, social order were all involved. Westerners used to a terminology which implies the separate character of "religion", "politics", and society often say that in the fiki's social order, "religion" was seen as being relevant to all aspects of life. However, the fiki's legacy is something that goes beyond this to a social order and mood in which "religion" does not exist even as a separate conceptual entity.

The people who are now being more fully brought into the society with centralized management in a state are accustomed to a holistic ordering of faith and the soci-political order. Such people are increasingly aware of the currents of political action in the Sudan. Until the 1970s, the political arena was largely controlled by an modern educated elite that had limited contact with the older holistic society. The state structure that was created could be built on a secularist model because those who were managing the state or felt themselves to be participants in its operation saw the secularist model as desirable. However, the very success of the modernization process has given a much wider range of Sudanese society an awareness of the political processes. Many of the political elite are themselves products of the process of this educational expansion.

In this context, one can say that the evolution of the

interaction between the old "state-ignoring" Islamic structures and the developing state structures opens the way in the 1970s and 1980s for a move away from the old goal of a secular state. A growing proportion of the politically aware Sudanese are accustomed to a holistic mode of socio-political organization. They are not only ready to accept a policy of Islamization in the 1980s but they may, in the past few years have been applying a subtle pressure in that direction through informal expressions of their views and desires in many different contexts.

It might be added that, in logical terms, it is possible to suggest the type of Islamization program that would be most appealing to this newly-participating sector of the political population. This program would probably not be intellectually complex or sophisticated. Rather, it would be basic and clear, avoiding scholastic ambiguities. In addition, a program that was not tied by its definitions and concepts to a particular "sectarian" group in the Sudan would have added appeal. That is, a program that was too visibly Mahdist/ Ansar or Mirghani in its initiation might appear "sectarian." In reality, this is just the style of Islamization program that is being introduced in the 1980s in the Sudan. The old Islamic substratum, in its contemporary form, may have helped to shape this program.

Islamic Notables and the State. Many of the families of notable Muslim teachers and leaders in the Sudan can trace their ancestry back to prominent teachers in the Funj period. Other Islamically prominent families rose to importance more recently (some even within the past generation). However, together they

represent a stratum of society that has considerable importance. Most have provided leadership in a variety of ways for the people in their areas. In the Funj days leaders of such families were important mediators between the sultans and their subjects while in the twentieth century they serve as members of parliaments and the Peoples Assembly, administrative officials, and educators, among many roles.

The importance of this stratum as a whole is sometimes obscured by the attention given to two major families with countrywide influence, the Mahdi family and the Mirghanis. It should be remembered that these two families represent a special case. The great Sayyids emerged to countrywide prominence under special conditons.

The Mirghani family came to the Sudan in the early nineteenth century and established the Khatmiyyah Tariqah in a number of areas in the Sudan at the same time that the Turco-Egyptian regime was establishing a more centralized state structure. Khatmiyyah centers were more closely coordinated in their activities and leadership than were the school-tomb centers of the older orders and families in the Sudan. By parallel development with the state structure and cooperation with the Turco-Egyptian rulers, the Khatmiyyah became a large scale grouping of a type new to the Sudan. This provided the basis, in the twentieth century, for major members of the Mirghani family, especially Sayyid Ali, to become figures of national political importance.

The family of the Mahdi rose abruptly to prominence with the success of the movement of Muhammad Ahmad. They played important

roles in the developing Mahdist state although limited to some extent by the tensions between them and the Mahdi's successor, the Khalifah Abdallahi. By the early twentieth century most of the major leaders in the family had been killed or were in detention. However, by the 1920s, a son of the Mahdi, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, created an effective national scale organization. (Ibrahim, 1980) In this way the Mahdist followers, the Ansar, and Sayyid Abd al-Rahman became a major political force in the era of the development of nationalism and of the politics of independence.

The families and organizations of these two Sayyids have a special impact that is in some ways similar to the other Muslim notable groupings in the Sudan but in other ways is distinctive and needs to be considered separately.

In general terms, Islamic notables and their families have developed structures which have been complementary to the developing institutions of the state. There have been times of tension and resentment when rulers have attempted to encroach too directly upon the activities of the notables but it has taken very special conditions for a significant number of these families to support or participate in open revolt. The major occasion of this nature was in the late nineteenth century when many notable Islamic families joined the Mahdiyyah in overthrowing the Turco-Egyptian regime.

The holy families have been remarkable in the twentieth century for their adaptability. Many provided modern education for at least some of the younger generation while older and

younger generations alike were able to move into positions in the modern economic and political structures that developed. While doing this, most were also able to maintain some clear tie to their heritage, maintaining the older school-tomb centers and sometimes aiding in their evolution into more modern welfare centers within a market economy and a more centralized political system. This type of evolution has been described in a recent study of the Badrab family and its center in Umm Dubban. ( El Hassan, 1980)

The school-tomb center in Umm Dubban is of special interest because of its relationship to current leadership in the Sudan. This relationship reflects significant dimensions of the continuing evolution of Islamic notables-state relations. The school-tomb center was established in the mid-nineteenth century by a local fiki in the Gezirah area just south of Khartoum. The man, Muhammad Badr al-Ubayd (c.1810-1884), who is called Sheikh El Obeid in dispatches from the era of Charles Gordon and the Mahdi, went on pilgrimage to Mecca from which he returned filled with pious zeal. He established a school at Umm Dubban which soon became famous, attracting students from a large area. Many of the local fikis in the area received their basic training at this school. They represent a small network of locally influential teachers with its center at Umm Dubban and usually identified as being associated with the Qadiriyyah Tariqah. ("Notes on Tribes," 1931.) Many of these people, by the middle of the twentieth century, had achieved the status of "notables" themselves.

Like many of their counterparts in the rest of the Islamic Sudan, the Badrab of Umm Dubban have been relatively conservative

politically, that is, they have not been in the forefront of initiating political action or change. They have, rather, followed a path of adapting to changes as they take place while preserving as much of their old status and the old social structures as possible. In this way, in the nineteenth century, Shaykh Muhammad Badr al-Ubayd was neither noted for his support nor for his opposition to the Turco-Egyptian regime. However, when it became clear that a choice had to be made, he and his family gave their vigorous support to the Mahdist cause, with the sons of Muhammad Badr assuming important posts in the Mahdist administration. With the defeat of the Mahdist state, the Badrabs made the adjustment to British rule relatively easily. Some members of the family maintained the school-tomb complex as khalifahs ( "successors") to Muhammad Badr while others became the pillars of "native administration" in the area. Similar adjustments have been made as regimes changed over the years, from British rule to independence, from party politics and parliaments to military rule and revolutionary regimes.

In general terms the structures of this stratum have been politically cooperative and state-supporting, regardless of the nature of the state, just so long as the basic essentials of these structures have not been openly threatened. In this context, however, the Islamic notables do not have great incentive to be too strong in their support of a vigorously secularist government.

The contrast can be seen in actions of the Khalifah of Muhammad Badr in the past two decades. During the 1960s and the

early years of the May Revolutionary regime, the local Islamic notables were accused by state administrators and planners of obstructing educational and health changes and of being obstacles to modernization. In that context, the Khalifah opposed the building of a governmental intermediate school and a hospital. However, in the context of a government that worked to recognize and encourage this stratum of local leadership, after 1971, the Khalifah himself built a new hospital, a secondary school for girls, and other facilities which assisted in governmental development efforts. ( El Hassan, 1980, pp. 181-185.)

The leaders of the old style state-supporting or state complementing structures have had an important if not always prominent influence in the past decade. The May Revolutionary regime began with a flourish of radical rhetoric and a strongly communist tone. In terms of "religious" policy, this meant a strong emphasis on the creation of a truly secular regime and a reduction of the influence of "reactionary religious" elements. Such a regime was the least desirable from the standpoint of the Islamic notables.

Major developments altered this situation. The large "national" Islamic groups, especially the Ansar, moved to oppose the revolutionary regime directly and were defeated in 1970. Then, there was an open clash between the communists and the revolutionary group led by Numayri in 1971. Numayri's victory over the organized communists opened a new stage in the May Revolutionary government. The old parliamentary parties and the communists were defeated and rejected as sources of support for the government. There was, however, the possibility of making a

more populist appeal to the general population and in this effort the old style Islamic notables were an possible source of cooperation. These people were consulted and throughout the 1970s Numayri had regular contact with such Islamic leaders, as seen in his regular visits to the Khalifah in Umm Dubban and other local Qadiriyyah notables in that area.

The impact of this in general terms is that an important element in the population could be tapped for support. Its leadership was a type that was congenial to some one like President Numayri. Tariqah shaykhs were experienced but were not inclined to organize large scale political movements on their own. They did not offer a major challenge but they could offer highly significant support. They also could offer non-political advice which could help to set the evolving tone of the May Regime. This tone would clearly not include support for a secularizing state.

It is difficult to draw the necessary distinctions. It is tempting to speak of the "growing political influence" of the Sufi shaykhs by the early 1980s. However, this could give the wrong impression. The Islamic notables have little direct influence over the formulation of political policies. What they have had, and may continue to have, is an important role in molding the tone of presidential policies.

This evolving tone has increasingly ignored "secularist" style policies. In his major political speeches throughout the 1970s, it has been said that "the articulation of religious symbols was one of Nimeiri's dominant operative strategies.



President Nimeiri employs religious symbols extensively." (Hamid, 1983, p. 207.) However, before 1980, overtly Islamic rhetorical strategies were less important than other ones like utilizing the rhetorical terminology of revolutionization. (Hamid, 1983, passim.) A less systematic analysis of major speeches since the beginning of 1980 shows a significantly more Islamic tone, both in specific references and in the terminology used. This tone seems in many ways related to the mood and style of the religious notables who were increasingly visibly associated with the regime by the 1980s.

By the 1980s there had been a clear movement away from the goal of a secular state. The mood and general orientation of policy was in growing contrast to the overt secularism of the radical phase of the revolutionary regime and the more covert secularist approaches of the parliamentary political elite of the 1960s. This movement was supported by the fact that the Islamic notables continued in their more traditional roles of operating state-supporting or state complementary structures, as they have for centuries. In the context of the early 1980s, they thus helped to create the conditions for the initiation of the policy of Islamization.

Mahdists and the State. The third type of structure in the Sudan involving Islam-state relations is traditionally associated with the Mahdist tradition. This is the Islamic style that presents an alternative state in contrast to the existing one.

In the history of the Sudan there have been a number of opportunities for an Islamic, alternative-state advocating revolution. At the end of the eighteenth century in the sudanic

belt of Africa just south of the Sahara there were a number of such revolutions, the most famous of which was the holy war inspired by Uthman dan Fodio in west Africa. The disintegration of the Funj state in the Sudan, coupled with the arrival of neo-Sufi renewalist groups, suggest that there was the potential for a similar holy war in the Sudan. This was pre-empted by the Turco-Egyptian conquest and the neo-Sufi groups reorganized themselves. Some like the Khatmiyyah Tariqah developed state-supporting structures which they have maintained to the present time, usually avoiding the creation of organizations which suggested any revolutionary change of state system. Another order of neo-Sufi origins, the Sammaniyyah Tariqah, despite its own political passivism, provided the spiritual education and training for Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi.

It was the Mahdist movement of the 1880s which set the standard for the alternative state mode of Islamic structures in the Sudan. Even when the Mahdist state was destroyed there continued to be a high level of popular messianic anticipation of the establishment of a divinely-ordained state. It is important to note that these expectations involved a messianic vision rather than advocacy of a more fundamentalist program of implementation of Islamic law. During much of the twentieth century both governments and the established Ansar leadership mistrusted and attempted to control this chiliastic style of Mahdism.

By the 1920s, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi had succeeded in creating a "national" organization for the Mahdists. Through his

careful leadership and the growing financial resources of the Mahdi family and the Ansar organization, the Mahdists became a major political force. While Mahdism never lost its association in principle with the advocacy of an alternative state, in practice, the Ansar under Sayyid Abd al-Rahman's leadership cooperated with the British regime in a number of significant ways and then provided the basis for a major political party (the Ummah Party) in the era of independence. (Warburg, 1978, chap. 1)

In the twentieth century the Mahdist movement has been an important political force. However, once it was organized by Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, it operated as a competing group within an existing state system rather than actively advocating an alternative state structure. In terms of actual programs and practical political action, there were times when the Mahdists supported "alternative state" programs, but these were not specifically Islamic.

In the years before the achievement of independence, the Ansar were active in support of Sudanese nationalism, advocating a separate and independent Sudanese state in contrast to those nationalists who supported some form of unity with Egypt. It was independence, not Islam, which was the operational part of the Ansar program at that time. Then, after independence the Mahdists participated as a political group within the parliamentary system. When that system was overthrown by General Abboud, the Ansar again advocated an alternative state but this program was primarily to be a return to a parliamentary system. Implementation of Islamic law and the creation of an Islamic constitution were suggested but in practice postponed. When in a

similar position of opposition in the 1970s, the Ansar position again was oriented toward restoration of a parliamentary regime rather than the initiation of an Islamic one.

Despite this history, the Ansar and the Mahdist tradition have been the political group most closely identified with advocacy of an Islamic constitution and state. This was both the strength and the weakness for many years of the Islamic alternative state idea. It gave the idea a strong and well-organized group of supporters, but, at the same time, it identified the ideal with a particular partisan group. Thus, any Sudanese who opposed Ansar political interests tended to fear that implementation of an "Islamic state" would simply mean a constitutional and legal mechanism for Ansar domination of the Sudan. Although other groups formulated proposals for an Islamic constitution or advocated implementation of various aspects of Islamic law, the major proponent of an Islamic constitution was the Mahdist movement.

Proposals for Islamic constitutions did not make much progress in the first twenty years of independence. Even when the Ummah Party provided the political leadership in cabinets and parliaments, little of a decisive nature was accomplished. To some, an "Islamic state" meant little more than having visibly Islamic leadership.

There was, however, a growing awareness that Islamization might mean more than Mahdist control or Muslims as leaders. Groups advocating more comprehensive Islamization programs like the Muslim Brotherhood gained increasing influence among modern

educated Sudanese in the 1960s and 1970s. With the failure of Arab socialism on the Nasserite model to continue to appeal to many Sudanese and then the destruction of the Sudanese Communist Party, the traditional rivals of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood were removed from the scene. By the late 1970s, the failure of Ansar efforts to overthrow the government of Numayri opened the way for a popular awareness of Islamization programs that were not tied to Mahdism. At the same time, the success of the Muslim Brotherhood in presenting broader Islamization ideals and the popular awareness of international manifestations of the "Islamic resurgence" created a high level of interest among Sudanese Muslims.

By the early 1980s, the traditional "alternative state" Islamic structures were less influential than they had been previously. Other "alternative state" proposals were being advocated. One part of this advocacy was the idea that the "alternative state" could be achieved by a transformation of the existing state rather than by a militant revolution which would be both destructive and challenge the positions of many groups within society. One of the reasons why an Islamization program was implemented early 1980s was that the advocates of the older "alternative state" structures were weaker. Creating an Islamic state had become separated from Mahdist political organizations and structures. As a result, the way was open, possibly for the first time in modern Sudanese history, for a non-Mahdist Islamic state. This situation is reflected in the fact that the leading Ansar politician in the Sudan, Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi, opposed the Islamization program as initiated in September, 1983, and was

jailed because of that opposition. The liberation of Islamization programs from Mahdism seems, at least for the moment, to be achieved.

#### Conclusion.

Analysis "after the fact" can usually find reasons for important historical events. Hindsight has many benefits and this is why "policy analysis" is often more accurate than "policy forecasting." There are a number of elements in the evolution of state and Islamic structures in the Sudan which may not have seemed critical to observers previously but which now, in light of the Islamization program of 1983-1984, assume greater importance. An analysis of these elements can help to provide an answer to the question "Why now?"

At the present, it seems important to note that a number of the historic structures of Islamic life in the Sudan had developed to a point by the early 1980s so that the way was open for the initiation of a major Islamization program. The transformation of the "state-ignoring" structures under the pressures of modernization provides a broadened base of support for such a program. The changing, but remarkably constant, roles of the state-supporting structures of the Islamic notables strengthened this opportunity. The advocates of an alternative, Islamic state had changed in their position and roles, opening the way for Islamization by law and transformation rather than by revolution.

These evolutions in the interactions of Islam and the state, in other words, provided a special opportunity for the initiation

of an Islamization program in the early 1980s. They did not "determine" that such a program was inevitable. They also did not define in any clear way what the nature and content of that program would be. But the evolution of the interaction of state and Islamic structures created an opportunity in the early 1980s for an Islamization program.

MODERNIZATION & ISLAMIZATION

Observers of the Islamic resurgence in the 1970s sometimes speak of the Muslim fundamentalist impulse as a "conservative" one, hoping to preserve past forms and restore medieval structures. One mode of interpretation of Islamization efforts is to see them as reactions to the experience of modernization and in opposition to the processes of modernization. In popular journalistic accounts there are references to efforts to "turn back the clock" when discussing activist Islamization movements.

This type of interpretation has little relevance to the contemporary Sudanese experience. The current program does not reject programs of modernizing development and does not even engage in the rhetoric of anti-Western polemic that is sometimes found in militant Islamization efforts. However, beyond this, it is possible to argue that in the broader historical experience of the Sudan, modernization and Islamization have been complementary and often mutually supportive processes rather than competitive ones.

This complementarity can be seen in a number of aspects of the modern Sudanese experience. However, it is important to understand certain critical distinctions that are involved in this complementary relationship. These provide a basis for

understanding both the distinctive nature of the contemporary Sudanese experience of Islamization and the elements of that experience which are shared with other Muslim societies.

#### Islamization and Fundamentalism.

In the context of the final quarter of the twentieth century it has become common to think of any effort to make a society more fully Islamic as a fundamentalist effort. The visible elements of the Islamic resurgence of the 1970s and virtually any "militant" Islamic movement are in the shorthand vocabulary of rapid analysis labeled as "fundamentalist." This is not necessarily inaccurate or unhelpful so long as care is taken in defining what is meant by "Islamic fundamentalism."

Fundamentalism in the Muslim context is not "conservatism." In the normal usage of the term a conservative is one who aims at preserving existing institutions and attitudes. In contrast, fundamentalism is a critique of existing institutions and a call for major changes in order to shape those social structures and attitudes in accord with the "fundamentals" of the Islamic message. This is why contemporary fundamentalism is frequently associated with revolutionary opposition movements.

Fundamentalism can be defined in terms of the Islamic historical experience. It is possible to see, throughout Islamic history, a fundamentalist style of Islamic experience which has certain basic features. (Voll, 1982a, pp. 29-31.) This is that dimension of the Islamic mission which includes a spirit of socio-moral reconstruction of society and a strict adherence, without compromise, to a literal interpretation of the Quran and



the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. Although the distinctions are not always precise, this style can be differentiated from other Islamic styles and modes. Fundamentalism, then, is this rigorist dimension of the Islamic experience. It is not a separate "sect" so much as a dimension of the total experience that receives greater or lesser emphasis depending upon the circumstances and characteristics of Muslims in any given time or place.

In concrete terms, the fundamentalist style can be defined in terms of three spectra of Islamic attitudes defined by basic faith alternatives. These are the alternatives of immanence-transcendence, diversity-unity, and openness-authenticity. In this definition it should be remembered that neither alternative is ever totally absent in a particular individual, movement, or Islamic experience. However, experiences and movements can be described in terms of which of these alternatives are given the most emphasis or are most readily discerned in the activities and goals.

A fundamentalist, in the framework of this definition, is one that stresses the transcendent nature of God and His ethical commands. This differs from those groups which emphasize the immanence of God and the personalization of belief in a more mystical style of faith. Fundamentalists also stress a more rigorous ideal of Islamic unity and give less scope to recognition of local customs in the development of Islamic practice. In this way, fundamentalists have mistrusted and often opposed much of what is included in "popular" Islam. In the third pair of alternatives, fundamentalism concentrates on maintaining

the authenticity of the Islamic tradition and is in opposition to too great a cultural openness to "borrowing" from other cultural traditions.

In the modern Sudan, fundamentalism in accord with this definition is usually "a component of a broader perspective rather than the basis for special movements." (Voll, 1983b, 119.) Separate organizations primarily dedicated to a fundamentalist program have had less influence than the more inclusive structures of Sudanese Islam -- the school-tomb centers, the "national" organizations, etc. When fundamentalism has been influential it has been as a part of the mood of the more characteristically Sudanese Islamic structures.

An important reason for this situation is the special character of the Islamic presence in the Sudan. The Sudan is on the frontier of the Islamic world rather than being part of the Islamic heartland. This is often overlooked because of the close ties that the Sudan has with Egypt and the geographic proximity of the Arabian Peninsula. It is only remembered when a description is being given of the fighting in the southern, largely non-Muslim regions of the Sudan.

As has been noted, Islam did not penetrate the Sudan on a large scale until later medieval times and when it did come it was brought primarily by wandering merchants and nomadic tribes. There is, in other words, no large scale medieval Islamic institutional base in the Sudan similar to what exists in Egypt and other countries where the majority of the population has been Islamic from the very early days of the Islamic era. In those areas of long established institutional traditions of a

recognizably and widely-accepted Islamic nature, individuals and groups can concentrate on specific aspects of the Islamic experience. In the fundamentalist mood there is a sense of restoration or of reversion to principles which had once been followed but are currently being ignored.

In this context it is important to remember the frontier nature of Sudanese Islamic society. Over the centuries there has been a long and gradual process of Islamization of the society. There is no medieval substructure that has any claim on nostalgia. Instead, the medieval substratum in the Sudan is the heritage of the "subsistence" style popular Islam of the local fikis. These early Sudanese Islamic structures represent only first steps in the Islamization of society and no one considers them to be "classically" Islamic in any form. Even the wandering teachers of the early Funj period had as their first priority the mission to bring a more complete understanding of Islam to the local people. The heart of the Islamic mission in the Sudan since that time has been the education of those whose Islam is parochial and incomplete.

This provides the basis for a distinction between the Islamization program of the early 1980s in the Sudan and the more commonly discussed contemporary fundamentalist movements elsewhere. In the late 1970s one perceptive analysis of the Islamic resurgence spoke of it as the "phenomenon of Re-Islamization." (Khalid, 1978) Modern fundamentalism in heartland Islamic societies can be described as a major effort of "re-Islamization." It is not, however, simply a terminological

difference to note that such a terminology does not apply to the fundamentalist dimension in Sudanese Islam. In the Sudan, fundamentalism is a part of the continuing long-term historical process of the original Islamization of a "frontier" Islamic society.

Under these conditions, the process of Islamization brings together as allies social forces which in more fully established societies are competitors. For example, in North Africa in the first half of the twentieth century, the Islamic reformist groups vigorously opposed the keepers of the tombs and the Sufi brotherhoods as being a source of major compromise with non-Islamic practices. In the Sudan the school-tomb centers have been and continue to be an important force for bringing a more complete knowledge of Islam to the general population. Similarly, in other areas of the world, religiously charismatic style leadership has been viewed with suspicion by fundamentalists while in the Sudan the Mahdist movement has itself been a major source of fundamentalist inspiration. The school-tomb centers, the major tariqahs, and Mahdism are not distinctively fundamentalist, but in the context of the Islamic frontier they have an important fundamentalist dimension.

There is a significant distinction between fundamentalism and Islamization in the Sudan. They are complementary in many ways but are not identical. The process of continuing Islamization is different from that of "re-Islamization." The specific program initiated by Numayri in the early 1980s fits into this framework. It has fundamentalist dimensions to it but it cannot simply be described as a fundamentalist movement.

Instead, the Numayri program must be seen as a part of the longterm Islamization of Sudanese society.

This process involves the transformation of the old fiki structures. The Islamic notables participate in that process. By the early 1980s it appears that the evolution of Islamic structures in the Sudan reached a point where a more openly rigorous and literal adherence to the Quran and the Sunnah could be demanded. This evolution has been re-enforced by the modernization of the Sudan.

#### Islamization and Modernization.

In a number of significant ways the processes of Islamization and modernization involve the same things in the Sudan. The transformation of a subsistence economy and a peasant/tribal society with socially self-contained units involves many of the same changes that are involved in the incorporation of the old "state-ignoring," popular Islam of the fikis into a more strictly Islamic society.

Both modernization and Islamization involve breaking down parochial barriers and opening more cosmopolitan perspectives to the believing Muslim. Many of the assumptions involved in the requirements of Islam presuppose a relatively highly developed society. The requirement of the pilgrimage to Mecca, for example, necessitates at least a rudimentary awareness of an interregional travel network and the ability to imagine oneself in a significantly different context. The payment of the tithe (zakat) implies the existence, at least to some degree, of a cash economy while the prohibition of interest clearly assumes a well-

developed financial system. Being a faith based on The Book, containing the record of divine revelation, Islam has stressed the importance of at least basic literacy.

One consequence of this is that a person could say that the improvement in communications and transportation systems, greater accessibility of means of international travel, development of a cash and market economy, and the expansion of the education system are basically "fundamentalist" Muslim programs. At least, whether the motive for introducing programs of this type is to create a modern or a more Islamic society the impact is the same. To the extent that Sudanese Muslims participate in modern style activities, they are being drawn away from the old popular Islamic customs and social order. In the Sudan, and in similar areas, this has meant an increase, not a decrease, in participation in more rigorist styles of Islamic structures.

A recent study of a rural and comparatively isolated area in the Sudan, Dar Masalit, provides some concrete illustrations of the complementarity of modernization and Islamization. (Tully, 1984, especially pp. 340-345.) In this study, Dennis Tully notes that while the Masalit have been Muslims for some centuries, the style of Islam was the "popular" Islam associated with fiki into which many local beliefs and practices were incorporated. Mahdist reform efforts did little to change these basic practices.

Increased trade and migration in the twentieth century has made the Masalit more aware of "a more orthodox practice of Islam" which involved "practices and beliefs which are characteristic of 'Sudanese metropolitan Islam' and which most Masalit now consider superior to their local practice." (Tully,

1984, 341-342.) The leaders in adopting the more cosmopolitan Islam are those who are most involved in the emerging modern economy and social order: merchants and small town artisans and shopkeepers. The practices adopted by these more cosmopolitan and modernized believers provides a list which sounds like a platform for the strictest of fundamentalist groups. There is insistence on proper and modest clothing, avoidance of intoxicating beverages (despite the important role of a local drink in traditional social relations in the area), study of the literate tradition of Islam, and eagerness to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. In summary, one might say that one impact of the process of modernization in Dar Masalit has been to increase local awareness of and adherence to a style of Islam in which the fundamentalist dimension is much stronger than it has been in the past in that region.

Modernization has not necessarily reduced the importance of Islam in the Sudan. Instead it has worked with other longterm historical processes to change the basic nature of Islamic institutions in the country. It has been noted on occasion that the "traditional" Islamic institutions have survived with a remarkable degree of vigor. It is important to remember, however, that these vigorous Islamic institutions in the second half of the twentieth century are not the institutions of the old-style popular Islam. Parochial militant chiliasm and the magical practices of the fikis are being eliminated by a combination of the pressures of modernization and Islamization led by more "orthodox" Islamic forces.

The creation of the "national" organizations of the Ansar and the Khatmiyyah provided ways of controlling the previously autonomous local fikis. Modern means of communication made such control more effective. The establishment of a "national" level of political action through the emergence of nationalist groups and an effectively centralized state both supported the political power of the great Sayyids and was made possible by their successful efforts. The developments were mutually complementary.

For much of the twentieth century this Islamization was primarily personality rather than document and message oriented. Simple institutional allegiance was a satisfactory basis for Islamic identity. One could simply say, "I am an Ansar," or "I am a Khatmi", or "I follow Shaykh So-and-So," and that was sufficient. The major modern step in this type of loyalty was the shift in the focus of loyalty from some local, tribally-associated fiki to a more cosmopolitan organization or more "orthodox" person.

By the final quarter of the twentieth century it is possible to see a further step in this process. In a general discussion of contemporary Islamic developments, Michael Hudson describes an insitutional decline within Islamic societies which is probably not as great in the Sudan as it is elsewhere, because of the continuing strength of a variety of structures. However, Hudson makes a very useful distinction between "Islam as Actors and Organizations" and "Islam as Ideology" (Hudson, 1980, pp. 14-15.) While the older actors and organizations retain a remarkable degree of influence and importance, there is growing importance



being given in the Sudan to the actual content, the "ideology" of the Islamic message.

In the past there has not been a great deal of popular enthusiasm for full intellectual platforms for Islamic programs. The actors involved and their organizations tended quite often to be the "content" of the program. For many Ansar before independence, for example, an "Islamic state" meant simply that it would be ruled in some way by Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi. More thorough presentations tended to appeal only to the educated elite in the Sudan. In this way for many years the primary audience of the Muslim Brotherhood, and their continuing major focus of support, has been the student bodies of the universities and the graduates of those universities.

By the late 1970s there was an increasingly visible fundamentalist style in the Sudan. This involved greater attention to intellectual content and ideology than had been the case before. In some ways there had been a shift in the "center of gravity" of Muslim attitudes toward "Islam as Ideology." This involves a significant change.

Strictly fundamentalist positions have historically appealed only to the educated elite in the Sudan in the twentieth century. Thus, if there is an increasingly visible fundamentalist style in the Sudan, either this basic condition has changed and the fundamentalists have found a way to appeal to the uneducated masses or the increased influence of fundamentalist approaches reflects the continuing modernization of Sudanese

society and the growing basis of an educated population for support of fundamentalist positions. I believe that the latter has been taking place in recent years in the Sudan. (Voll, 1983b, p. 137).

Modernization and Islamization thus are in a number of ways mutually supportive. By the early 1980s a critical level in both seems to have been reached, enabling the more general process of Islamization to assume a more specifically fundamentalist form. Given the personalization and dramatic style of the initiation of the formal Islamization program in 1983, it is clear that the transition from "Islam as Actors and Organization" to "Islam as Ideology" has not been complete but it is clear that an Islamic state now has to mean more than rule by a good Muslim. In this combination of elements and modes, the Islamization program of the 1980s reflects the special characteristics of the Sudanese Islamic experience as well as aspects of classical fundamentalism

#### Convergence of Islamization & Modernization

The long process of the Islamization of society in the northern Sudan appears to have reached a new stage by the final quarter of the twentieth century. During later medieval and Funj times there was the gradual introduction of Islam and the establishment of the foundations for "popular" Islamic structures. The frontier location of the Sudan created special conditions for the development of Islamic institutions. There was a long period of flexible adjustments and adaptations. Then, the purifying holy war took the special form of the Mahdi's movement in the late nineteenth century.

The fundamentalist style of Mahdism represented by the

movement of Muhammad Ahmad reflected the special stage of Islamization reached by the Sudan in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is

that time when Islam passes from being a localized cult in a largely pagan society to a society in which the universalized Islamic ideal is widely accepted by masses and leaders. In a less Islamized society, if conditions of unrest called forth a messianic movement, it would have been of a more charismatic, prophetic style. In a more fully Islamized society, the movement would not normally have evoked the messianic title of 'mahdi' as a support for fulfilling the function of a mujaddid [renewer]. In the heartlands of Islam the mujaddid can be believed to be truly a reviver of what existed previously in that very society, and he may not need as much messianic sanction. What we find in the Sudan is a fundamentalist mahdi. (Voll, 1979, p. 163)

In the century since Muhammad Ahmad many things have changed in the Sudan. The process of Islamization has continued. The process of modernization has made progress in creating new economic and social conditions and has brought about a greater mass awareness of the broader world. These two lines of evolution have supported each other in reducing the influence of the oldest style of Islamic experience, that related to "popular" Islam. By the 1980s, the convergence of these two developments appears to have created the conditions for a new stage in the Islamization of the Sudan.

In the 1880s the initiation of a major Islamization effort took the form of a messianic proclamation. This was necessary because of the special frontier conditions of Islam. Now the Sudan is still an Islamic frontier but in the 1980s it is a "more fully Islamized society" than the Sudan of the late nineteenth century. Modernization has opened the way for a more ideological form of Islamization and reduced (but not eliminated) the need and inclination to have Islamization associated with a charismatic leader. In this way, the Islamization program of the 1980s is more mujaddid (or Wahhabi) in style and less Mahdist. Just as Muhammad Ahmad appears in history as a special kind of Mahdi, so, too, Ja'far Numayri is a distinctive type of Islamizer. He has formalized the process of Islamization in an era when the center of Islamic life in the Sudan seems to be shifting from "Islam as Actors and Organizations" to "Islam as Ideology." The opportunity for this is provided by the special convergence of modernization and Islamization that is taking place in the Sudan.

#### CONCLUSION: ISLAMIC RESURGENCE- WHY NOW IN THE SUDAN?

In answering the question of why has the Islamization program been initiated in the Sudan now, it is tempting to say simply that this is part of the general resurgence of Islam and the global resurgence of "religion" in many different traditions. It is, from this perspective, not surprising that there is a major Islamization effort at this time of resurgence in the home country of the Muhammad Ahmad the Mahdi.

In examining the basic socio-religious structures in the

Muslim Sudan, it seems clear that there is more involved than the influence of the general Islamic resurgence. In fact, the Sudanese Islamization program takes a special shape and has significance within the framework of Sudanese history. The role of the broader Islamic resurgence is one of providing support and confidence rather than providing the basic stimulus for this resurgence.

The initiation of the program of Islamization in the 1980s takes place with the context of a number of significant long term developments within the Sudan. These are, in particular, the evolution of Islamic structures and their interactions with the state in the Sudan, and the convergence in the twentieth century of the processes of modernization and Islamization. These long term developments did not make the particular program of Islamization inevitable but they did provide stimulus and opportunity for such a program. In this, the example of other programs of Islamization within the contemporary Islamic world has played a role, providing support and encouragement for Sudanese Muslims.

In summary, the Islamization program appears to have been initiated in the 1980s because it represented an appropriate next stage in the development of Sudanese institutions. Long term developments opened the way for this by the 1980s. The opportunity was provided but the specific nature of the program and its leadership were not necessarily determined by these long term trends alone. It is also important to ask why President Numayri was the one to initiate the program and why that particular program was the one initiated.

#### PART IV. THE INITIATOR & THE PROGRAM.

The Sudanese Islamization program of the early 1980s is not simply a broad trend that has emerged within a general historical context. It is a specific program which has been initiated by a particular leader. The more specific level of analysis must deal with these subjects. In concrete terms, the basic questions are: "Why was President Numayri rather than some other person or group responsible for initiating the program?" and "Why was this particular program, rather than some other alternative, the one that was initiated?"

These questions are closely related because there are two dimensions to questions about initiation of a program such as the recent Islamization program. The first is the direct leadership issue: who was the person who actually put it into effect? The second is related to the nature of the specific program. Some individuals or a group may not actually be in direct positions of power but may still be thought to be the "initiators" if they can persuade or influence the leader to adopt their own program.

#### WHY NUMAYRI ?

In the twentieth century many different people and groups have attempted to provide intellectual and ideological leadership

for the Sudan. They have presented many different lines for the Sudan to follow with varying degrees of success. At times such groups have been outside of the government and have provided leadership through persuasion or extragovernmental activism. This is best seen in the era before independence with the development of nationalism. At other times, the people in positions of governmental power have assumed the role of the primary definers of the intellectual and ideological bases for policies.

Although the Islamization policy of the early 1980s may not have been as sudden as it seemed at the time, it still represents a significant reorientation of government policy in the Sudan. Many policies since independence were based on vague assumptions of the desirability of at least a quasi-secular state. There were many advocates for some role for Islam but often these were very vague in what they were actually proposing. What took place in the early 1980s is a conscious rejection of a secular state and the vigorous advocacy of an Islamic state.

The idea of establishing an Islamic state in the Sudan or approving an Islamic constitution was not new in the Sudan. A proposal for an Islamic constitution for the Sudan was made as early as the time of World War I by the Grand Mufti of the Sudan. In historic terms, the Mahdist state in the nineteenth century became a precedent even for non-Ansar Sudanese. The first clearly independent Sudanese state was an Islamic state, not a secular nation state.

Sudanese nationalism as it developed in the twentieth century had a clearly Islamic dimension. Both of the great nationalist slogans -- "Unity of the Nile Valley" and "The Sudan

for the Sudanese" -- had religious components. Islam was seen as one of the important common elements with Egypt, while the Mahdist tradition created a foundation for the idea of an independent and separate Sudan. In addition, the major political organizations that advocated these nationalist programs were each supported by a major Islamic figure. Sayyid Abd al-Rahman and the Ansar were clearly identified with the separate Sudan idea and Sayyid Ali Mirghani and the Khatmiyyah provided important patronage for the unity groups.

Islam was, however, a dimension of nationalist politics. It was not the basis at that time for a separate, formal program of Islamization. It was an identity to be recognized and cited and it was a set of ideals to which appeals could be made. It was in this form that Islam became embedded into the structure of Sudanese political party structures and modes of operation. Even after independence, when parties began to advocate more explicitly the establishment of an Islamic constitution, the political importance of Islam continued to be in its early more general role rather than in the more concrete role of the basis for a special program and policy line.

During the twentieth century the evolution of the political system and social structures appear to have provided the opportunity for more concrete programs of Islamization to be implemented. However, it was not until the relatively recent actions of Numayri that a concrete program of Islamization was formally initiated. Up until that time, Islamization could be seen, on the one hand, as a very long term process of social



evolution. On the other hand, in explicitly political terms, Islamization was more of an intellectual theme or an ideological presentation than a basis for actual policies to be implemented or laws to be enforced.

The actual implementation requires the opportunity, that is, either being in control of the political system or able to influence it significantly, and the determination to take the risks involved in beginning such a policy. Other groups advocating some form of Islamization have in the past decades lacked one or both of these characteristics, while Numayri has both in the early 1980s.

There are a number of possible sources for leadership of a program of Islamization at this time. It is useful to ask why these groups were not the ones to initiate the current program as well as to ask why it was Numayri that did. In the analysis of the alternative groups, there are two different aspects that need to be examined. One is whether or not they can be considered initiators because they have influenced Numayri and the other is whether or not they had the potential to gain control of the government in order to initiate the program on their own.

#### The Left & Islamization

The Sudanese Left has been an important political force in the Sudan even though it has not been a mass movement. Its support has come largely from urban professionals and students. Because these groups play an important role in the operation of the modern state and economy, the Left has had substantial political leverage. One of the major examples of this is the role of the Left in the October Revolution (1964) which overthrew the

military regime of Abboud. The Left also gave strong support initially to Numayri and the May Revolutionary regime.

For many years the most visible organization of the Left was the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP). The SCP was considered to be one of the largest and best organized communist parties in Africa or the Middle East. Although it provided support initially for the May Revolution, the SCP and communist officers in the Revolutionary Command Council soon clashed with Numayri. The conflict came to a head when the communist officers attempted to take control of the government in the summer of 1971. When the coup attempt was defeated, Numayri proceeded to destroy the SCP as well.

The Sudanese Left had never been fully unified, even within the SCP. There were two major tendencies among those identified as communists, one supporting a more nationalist orientation and a less militantly socialist program while the other was more doctrinaire. In addition, within the broader spectrum of "The Left," there was a significant group of Arab Socialists, usually following the intellectual lines of Nasserism.

The destruction of the SCP structure did not bring an end to less formally organized Leftist influences. The non-SCP intellectual left continued to play a role in the formulation and development of the programs of the May Revolutionary regime. The Arab socialist left was specially important in this regard. However, the Sudanese left was not able to create an effective populist movement or a mass mobilization organization, either independently or through governmental actions.

The Sudanese Socialist Union (SSU) is the product of a

variety of efforts and is the official mass organization of the May Revolutionary regime. It was originally partially modeled on the Nasserite model of the Arab Socialist Union. The SSU is not ineffective in providing support for government policies but neither the SSU (by itself) nor the unorganized socialist left is in a position in the 1980s to provide policy initiatives of the magnitude of the recent Islamization program. In addition, the opposition left is largely in exile where it does not seem to be an effective independent force. Since the mid-1970s it has operated in alliance with the more traditional party organizations. The SCP-in-exile, for example, is a part of the recently created National Salvation Front. Thus neither the regime supporting nor the opposition left seems to be in a position to initiate policy. The influence of the left depends upon the success of the partners with whom leftists are working.

One reason for the political weakness of the Sudanese left at the present time is that it has remained remarkably conservative in its mood. There has been little development of intellectual or ideological initiatives since the 1960s. The programs suggested remain the "classical" programs defined by SCP platforms in the 1960s or by the Nasserite proclamations of the same era. The real decline in the appeal of both Nasserism and "classical" Marxism undermines the ability of the Sudanese left to influence policy development in the Sudan. In contrast to developments in some parts of the Islamic world, the 1970s was not in the Sudan a time for the development of a significantly Islamic left. Sudanese students and intellectuals have read or

heard of the works of people like Ali Shari'ati or the Egyptian philosopher Hasan Hanafi but this has not inspired Sudanese leftists to develop a leftist or radical Islamic perspective.

This may be the result of the curious relationship between the Sudanese Left and the Sudanese Islamic tradition. Sudanese leftists have never made significant overt moves to reject the Islamic tradition. Even the leaders of the communist coup in 1971, during the era of the strongest push for a secularist state, still spoke of the Mahdi as the first national revolutionary and gave respectful attention to Islam. To some extent this was practical politics and shows a pragmatic desire to avoid alienating large segments of the population unnecessarily. However, it also seems to be true that even some of the most active communists were remarkably conservative in their personal religious views.

One minor concrete example can illustrate this. Ahmad Sulayman has recently published some of his memoirs. He is one of the founders of the Sudanese Communist Party and was a leader in the early Anti-Imperialist Front. He was among the nationalist left which continued to support the May Revolutionary regime throughout the 1970s. He has the reputation of being one of the leading leftist intellectuals in the modern Sudan. His memoirs begin with "In the name of God, the Compassionate and the Merciful," and a Quranic verse. His preface concludes with the sentence, "Praise be to God who guides us in this, and we could not be guided were we not guided by God." (Sulayman, 1983, pp. 5 and 13.) It might be said that these are just pious formulas rather than expressions of real faith. However, even if that were

true (which it probably is not), it illustrates that this leading leftist intellectual is still conservative enough to use relatively automatically the pious formulas of a relatively conservative Islamic life style.

In summary, the Sudanese left has not produced a radical Islamic alternative. With the traditional leftist formulations and weak organization, the Sudanese left is not in a position to initiate major policy reorientations at this time, either through influencing the current leaders or through a successful opposition movement. Under the current conditions of Islamic resurgence in the Muslim world as a whole and the specific opportunities in the Sudan in the early 1980s, the Sudanese left would have to be able to become an "Islamic left" in some way before it could assume a stronger position within the Sudanese political scene.

#### The Traditional Political Groupings

There is a long tradition of expressions of political support for creating a more visibly Islamic political system. The traditional political parties, especially in the eras of parliamentary politics, regularly included some statement of support at least for an Islamic constitution or some other formal recognition of a special role for Islam in the Sudanese political system.

These traditional parties are the organizations which emerged either as a part of the development of the nationalist movements of the 1940s or the electoral politics of the 1950s. The only parties which were not openly involved in the politics

of Islamization in those years were the organizations established by the non-Muslim politicians from the southern region. These latter represent a significant part of the Sudan but were not able to do much to reduce the visibility of the issue of an Islamic constitution or increasing the role of Islam in the state.

The traditional parties have been illegal since the establishment of the May Revolutionary regime in 1969. However, they continue to be an important means of identification, both for opponents of Numayri in exile and for people who are part of the current political system. In the elections for the Peoples Assembly in 1978, for example, it was still possible (and common) to identify many of the candidates in terms of the affiliation with traditional parties. (Warburg, 1981, p. 123)

One cannot simply say that the traditional parties did not introduce an Islamization program in the 1980s because they were out of power and illegal. They could possibly have been in a position to influence the existing government or to mount a revolution against it.

In actuality, the revolutionary potential of the traditional parties is very limited. Since the early 1970s various alliances of these parties have been formed in exile and have attempted to overthrow Numayri. Some of these efforts were very well financed and included a broad spectrum of major Sudanese political leaders. Even under those conditions in 1976, the traditional parties were not able to gain control of the government. It is unlikely that they would be in a position to do so in the early

1980s. Some of the major leaders have since died while others are now in jail or have joined forces with Numayri and are now active within the government.

It is also unlikely that the traditional parties would introduce a "revolutionary" Islamic program that is significantly different from the type of programs they advocated twenty years ago. Such platforms must meet the needs of political opposition politics. In the 1980s this means that the parties' program must be able to appeal to the traditional Marxists of the remaining SCP and the sensitivities of southerners. This is illustrated by the "national charter" recently promulgated by the newly formed opposition group in exile, the National Salvation Front (which includes among other groups, the SCP and a southern liberation group). The Front calls for the establishment of a provisional government which will "abolish the laws and systems which distorted the picture of Islam," and will formulate a draft constitution among whose major principles will be "to abide by Islam as a general ideological course and as a basic source of legislation." (FBIS-MEA-84-166, p. Q6.) In other words, the traditional parties in exile would abrogate the current Islamization program and return to the old more vague formulas of the days of parliamentary politics.

The basic ideological framework of the political leaders in the traditions of the old political parties remains tied to the idea of Islam as a basis for a general ideological atmosphere rather than as a basis for a concrete program with detailed provisions and specific applications. Even more traditional politicians who are part of the current government and who speak

favorably of the Numayri program, were not advocates of such a program before it was initiated. The idea of enforcing Islamic law in concrete terms might have appealed to them personally but they would probably have argued politically that such a program is not practical in the Sudan.

Politicians from the traditional parties did not have an important role in the initiation of the Islamization policy. In political terms they would have thought that it was impractical and in intellectual terms, they thought more of Islam as providing a general intellectual and ideological basis for policy rather than providing the specific content. In this way they were neither willing nor able to initiate an Islamization policy in the early 1980s.

The Special Mahdist Case. The Ansar-supported Ummah Party is in much the same position as the other traditional political parties in general terms. However, because of the special Mahdist heritage and the particular importance of the Mahdi family in the Sudan, it is useful to consider the more specific question of why the Mahdist movement did not provide the initiative for the implementation of the Islamization program in the early 1980s.

For many people in the Sudan the association of the Ansar and the mahdist tradition with the idea of an Islamic state had a special meaning. Regardless of what leading members of the Mahdi said or what the content of their programs actually were, the Mahdist program for an Islamic state was seen as being basically having the state lead by one of the members of the Mahdi family. The format tended to change over time, but Mahdist leadership



remained the constant element. In the early twentieth century many of the Ansar still thought of an Islamic state as being a restoration of the state of Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi, with Sayyid Abd al-Rahman filling the role of his father in that state. Then there was talk of a Mahdist monarchy in which an Islamic state meant that Sayyid Abd al-Rahman would be the king of an independent Sudan. Finally, as all nationalist programs moved in the direction of republican ideals, the Mahdist vision was of a presidential republic with Sayyid Abd al-Rahman as president.

The traditional Mahdist political program for an Islamic state was, and is seen by many Sudanese as continuing to be, a program within the framework of "Islam as Actors and Organizations." The distinctively Islamic character of the proposed state in this context depended upon leadership rather than ideological or programatic content. Even a leader in the Ummah Party, who was not a member of the Mahdi family, accused the major Mahdi family leaders of personalizing the leadership of the state in the late 1960s. Mohamed Mahgoub wrote later that the family leaders "seemed to consider the rule of the state a booty to be inherited and divided between them." (Mahgoub, 1974, p.224) This type of attitude weakens the ability of Ansar leaders to initiate Islamization which will appeal to Sudanese beyond the confines of the Mahdist movement. As a result, unless the Mahdists are actually in power or are in a position to take control by themselves (which the experiences of revolts and coup attempts in the 1970s showed is not possible under present conditions), a specifically Ansar program of Islamization cannot be initiated. In the early 1980s the Ansar leadership was not in

the appropriate position.

Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi, the grandson of Sayyid Abd al-Rahman, has a special place in the development of Sudanese Islamic politics. His grandfather had been the dominant figure in the Ansar movement and the Ummah Party and he had prepared his son, Sayyid Saddiq, to succeed him. Saddiq's sudden and unexpected death in 1961, within two years of his father's death (in 1959) upset these plans and threw the Ansar and Ummah organizations into some turmoil. One brother of Saddiq, Hadi, assumed the leadership of the Ansar and, in this position of "religious" leadership was called the Imam. Another brother, Sayyid Ahmad, became the administrator of the Mahdi family financial and economic affairs. The leadership of the Ummah Party passed to Saddiq's son, Sayyid Sadiq, who was a young Oxford graduate with little political experience but great potential ability.

In the 1960s Sayyid Sadiq attempted to restructure the Ummah Party, making it less dependent upon and identified with the Ansar. At that time, observers thought that Sadiq might represent a new style of Islamic but not necessarily "sectarian" politics in the Sudan. However, as a result of conflicts with his uncle, Hadi, political factionalism, and the general problems of Sudanese government during the second parliamentary era, Sadiq did not succeed. His ideas were too radical for the Ansar support that he needed and he was unable to build a core of reliable support beyond the Ansar. At this time the Muslim Brotherhood was growing in influence. While the Brotherhood and Sadiq often cooperated, it was the Brotherhood and not Sadiq that emerged as

the representative of new Islamic politics in the Sudan.

Since the revolution in 1969, Sadiq has continued to be an important political figure in the Sudan. Initially he opposed the revolutionary regime. He was associated with the Ansar revolt led by Hadi in 1970 and thus his identification with the Ansar was confirmed. In exile, as leader of the Ummah Party, he worked in the alliances of the traditional parties in opposition to the Numayri regime. This gave him the image of being firmly tied to the old style of partisan politics even though in his writings and speeches he was defining a very different approach to politics. In all of this, he could not and probably would not disassociate himself from the basic political position of being a member of the Mahdi family. He could not escape from the old idea that when a Mahdist spoke of an Islamic state, it meant basically that a member of the Mahdi's family would be the leader.

In 1977-1978 he negotiated a reconciliation with Numayri and returned to the Sudan. He cooperated with the government for a time and then assumed the role of critic without joining an opposition group. In this position it is possible to invent a scenario in which he would have become the mentor of Numayri for the initiation of an Islamization program. However, in the political context of the Sudan such a scenario would be dangerous for both men. From Numayri's perspective, such a line would provide the lever for Sadiq, a former prime minister, to begin actually running the government. From Sadiq's perspective, it would dilute his position as the leader of the largest single Islamic movement within the Sudan.

As a result, when the Islamization program was initiated in

the Sudan in the early 1980s, it was done without the help or support of Sadiq. It was a style of program which differed significantly from ones presented by Sadiq in various formats. (See, for example, al-Mahdi, 1987.) It also threatened Sadiq's position as a leading political spokesman for Islam. Sadiq opposed the program in the fall of 1983 in such a way that Numayri had to respond directly. Sadiq was jailed. Thus, rather than being an initiator of the Islamization program, either directly or indirectly, Sadiq was one of its first major opponents.

Sadiq and the Mahdists in particular and the traditional Sudanese political parties in general were not in a particular good position to initiate, either directly or indirectly, an Islamization program in the early 1980s, even though there was an opportunity for such a program. These people would have had either to overthrow Numayri (which they have been unable to do for fifteen years) or persuade him to adopt their particular style of Islamization program. This latter might have been possible in the context of the national political reconciliation but the potential power rivalries limited this possibility. In addition, the rather generalized Islamization program offered by the traditional party politicians would appear vague and time-wasting to a leader like Numayri.

#### Traditional Islamic Leadership

Traditional Islamic leadership in the Sudan is related to the distinctive structures that developed over the centuries in the Muslim north. In asking if traditional Islamic leadership

played a role, or could have played a role in initiating a policy of Islamization in the early 1980s, it is important to make some clear distinctions within this category of leadership. There are three general types of "traditional" Islamic leadership that need to be discussed in terms of their role in the Sudan: the ulama, the great Sayyids, and the local notables.

The Ulama. One of the distinctive aspects of the development of Islamic institutions in the Sudan is the absence of a significant ulama ( "mullah" or "clerical" ) class. In the evolution of Islamic structures there was no real opportunity for the development of an autonomous scholarly class. When schools were established, even in the early days of the Funj, they were only part of a broader style of social structure. The school was often identified with a "holy family", a tomb, and a tariqah. This broader matrix meant that when a special class of Islamic notables emerged, they were not identified simply as "learned men", the literal translation of ulama. They were scholar-saints and Sufi leaders.

The term most commonly used to apply to an Islamic teacher in the Sudan points to this dual role. The term fiki is seen as being derived from fagih, that is, a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence. However, the colloquial plural for fiki is usually fugara, the plural of fagir. A fagir is some one who is poor as a sign of having given up all for God, that is, a Sufi popular saint. ( Trimmingham, 1949, p. 140; Holt, 1973, p. 122.)

Schools and teachers have an important role in Sudanese Islam but they are not autonomous institutions. There is no

effective parallel in the Sudan to al-Azhar University in Egypt or the great seminary mosques of Qum in Iran. The major scholars with influence in the Sudan were also leaders of tariqahs and controllers of tomb centers of special importance to the development of popular faith.

The separate professional scholarly class that emerged tended to be the result of conscious government policy rather than the natural development of Sudanese institutions. The Turco-Egyptian rulers encouraged Sudanese to study at al-Azhar and worked to create a state-supporting ulama class but had little success in this. The British sought an ulama class in the Sudan to utilize as a means of controlling the possible threats to law and order from charismatic fikis but they soon shifted to working with the great Sayyids. The small professional Muslim scholarly class in the early twentieth century was large the result of the efforts of the British themselves to bring ulama from Egypt and to establish "orthodox" Muslim schools.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century this general situation has not changed significantly. There is no significant ulama class within the Sudan and thus such a class could not be a source of inspiration for initiating a program of Islamization. Those ulama that can be so identified in the Sudan tend to follow the initiative of the government rather than providing policy leadership.

The Great Sayyids. In the Sudan there are a large number of notable "holy families." One of the consequences of the development of the more centralized state in the nineteenth and twentieth century, and more specifically, one of the consequences

of the Mahdiyyah and the subsequent development of the Sudanese political system "was the polarization of Sudanese Islam between the Ansar...and the adherents of the Mirghani family. The other holy families, however ancient, however numerous their following, fell into the background." (Holt, 1973, p. 132.)

One of the most important features of the emerging dominance of the Mahdi and Mirghani families was their leadership. For more than half a century, each family was led by a strong individual, Sayyid Abd al-Rahman al-Mahdi and Sayyid Ali al-Mirghani respectively. These were the "great Sayyids." Even more than their families, it was these men who appeared to dominate Islamic life and opinion in the Sudan during the first half of the twentieth century.

Both of the Sayyids created large scale organizations which were and continue to be important in the Sudan in different ways. The Sayyids, the two major families, and the Ansar and Khatmiyyah organizations became significant parts of the nationalist movement and the political structure as it developed within the Sudan. As such, they created a network of organizations and loyalties that moved significantly beyond the traditional Islamic patterns. Their role is thus appropriately considered (as it has been in this study) with other modern political structures and parties. In an important way it is the "other holy families" who represent the more traditional forms of Islamic leadership in the Sudan.

The Islamic Notables. Even though the prominence of the Mahdi and Mirghani families in the twentieth century has obscured

the activities of other holy families, these still have venerable traditions and large followings. Islamic notables from such holy families are influential in many ways, especially in the areas surrounding the geographic centers of the family. The broad social structure of the school-tomb complex with its guiding holy family and its ties to a devotional tradition (tariqah) is a remarkably strong structure in the contemporary Sudan. Rather than gradually disappearing in the twentieth century, the Sudanese Muslim community continues to generate new holy families and orders. While many of the Muslim notables belong to families with rich histories, often going back to the time of the Funj, there are a remarkable number of relatively influential families of very recent origin, with the first religiously prominent leader in the family emerging to importance in the twentieth century. A good example of this is the family of Sharif Yusuf al-Hindi (c.1865- 1942).

This stratum of Islamic notables has played an important role in the development of the modern Sudan even though it has often been obscured by the actions of the two great Sayyids and their families. There have been two significant levels of action for this grouping. The first level is action in the more traditional mode. As influential people in their localities, they have played an important role in the development of local and regional administration and in the developing political parties. There are many people drawn from these families in every elected or nominated council at all levels. They are clearly recognized spokesmen for local interests and often act effectively as mediating links between the government and important segments of



the general population. This is a "traditional" role for members of these families which they have performed since the days of the Funj but it also appears to be an important "modern" role as well.

This "traditional" role is a relatively passive one in terms of overt political activity. In this role the Islamic notable seeks to influence policies and governmental actions but often "after the fact." The notable will help to shape the tone or influence the mode of implementation. On the long run, subtle pressure from the notables can make a significant difference. However, the notables in their traditional roles seldom take open political initiatives on their own.

In the early 1980s the Islamic notables do not appear to have changed their mode of operation. They had a long term role in shaping the context within which the Islamization program could be introduced but they were not themselves the initiators. Islamic notables like the leaders in the Umm Dubban area also helped to increase the Islamic sensibilities of President Numayri and others through their consultations and discussions. However, these "traditional Sufis" were not the direct source of the initiative for or the content of the current Sudanese Islamization program. Instead, their role has been to help in shaping the context which opened the way for the program and they now provide support and encouragement.

A second level of involvement by the traditional notable families is more complex. Many of the families have made sure that their younger generations have received modern educations.

The families have a different kind of presence in the political system through these modern educated sons who are part of the modern educated political elite in the country. Many of these sons have maintained sympathetic loyalties to their families and some even maintain a clear organization contact.

The list of important Sudanese leaders who come from the old style notable families is long and impressive. A few examples will show the type of role played by these people. Perhaps the most prominent "modern" political figure of this type is the first Prime Minister of the independent Sudan, Ismail al-Azhari. Al-Azhari was a descendant of Ismail al-Wali (1793-1863), a famous holy man in the western province of Kordofan. His descendants are the leaders of the Ismailiyyah Tariqah and maintain a reputation for piety. In addition, as the name "al-Azhari" notes, one branch of the family is identified with scholars who studied at al-Azhar in Egypt. Ismail al-Azhari's father was Mufti of the Sudan (1924-1932) and his uncles were leaders of the Ismailiyyah Tariqah. Al-Azhari himself maintained close ties with the tariqah and his house in Omdurman was a major meeting place for its followers. Al-Azhari is often spoken of as being the leading proponent in the 1950s of "secularizing" Sudanese politics. In the context of the Sudan, this did not mean separating Islam from politics; it meant advocating "non-sectarian" politics, that is, politics not dominated by the two great Sayyids and their "sects." This policy position of al-Azhari's becomes more readily understandable when it is remembered that he not only graduated from the American University of Beirut but also that he was a member of one of the

notable families which was not tied to either of the great Sayyids' organizations.

In the era of the May Revolutionary regime members from these families continue to be active in the political arena. Their open impact on policy formulation is difficult to determine. One scholar, for example, argues that in the mid-1970s Numayri worked to increase popular support for the regime by strengthening his relations with the leaders of the smaller tariqahs. "Ministries and senior bureaucratic posts were given to persons with sufi background or who happened to be related to the families of religious turug [tariqahs]." (El Hassan, 1980, 174.) However, some of the officials named by this scholar are the same ones cited by another scholar for expressing "critical views of the traditional Muslim value-system of the Sudanese masses." (Warburg, 1981, p. 120.) Even here, however, some of the basic positions of these families may be reflected since the families have, since the days of the Funj, sought to Islamize the popular Islam of the Sudanese masses and, in modern politics have often, like al-Azhari, hoped to remove "sectarian" influences from politics.

The government official from a notable family can and does have a subtle influence. However, such people do not appear to have had a direct role in initiating the Islamization policy. This is because they are not organized as a cohesive political faction and thus do not have an effective means of policy formulation. Their influence is less direct.

The Special Case of Abu Groom and Awad el Geed. The most

direct influence of this stratum on the Islamization policy is reflected in the position during 1983-1984 of Nayal Abu Groon and his associate, Awad el Geed Mohamed Ahmed. These two young men have been high level advisors to President Numayri during the months of the actual implementation of the Islamization program and some observers have seen them as having a special influence over the process of initiation and implementation.

Their role is clearly important but "Rasputinist" theories miss their actual significance which does help to define the nature of the program. President Numayri is a leader with a flair for the dramatic move and often has little patience with details and long "academic" discussions. By 1987 there had been committees and commissions studying implications of legal Islamization for some years. The concept of Islamization that was emerging was an imaginative one but was built on a long-term evolution of society based on carefully considered steps rather than being a dramatic transformation of society. For his program of Islamization Numayri seems to have wanted not more committees and deliberations but people who would simply "do it." It is in this context that Nayal Abu Groon and Awad el Geed played their important role.

Nayal Abu Groon comes from a family with a local reputation for piety and a revered tomb which is in the network of families associated with the Badrab of Umm Dubbar just south of Khartoum. He is a graduate of the University of Khartoum and was a government official. Awad el Geed has a similar background with a law degree. President Numayri found these men willing to "do it" in terms of the rapid Islamization of the Sudanese legal system

and political structure. They are identified with Sudanese Islamic traditions and sympathetic to the ideals and goals of Islamization. They are not responsible for the initiation of the program but they are important figures in implementing the program in the style desired by Numayri. In this way, they continue in the tradition of the state-supporting role of the notable families for centuries.

One area where these two men have had a direct influence is in the initiation of the idea of a bay'ah or oath of allegiance as a part of the Islamization program. It appears that when Nayal Abu Groon and Awad el Geed became presidential advisers, they wished to show their special loyalty to the president. Within the Sufi tradition of their background, the personal bay'ah to the shaykh was the expression of such a loyalty. They used this idea as the basis for the expression of their loyalty to the president and his Islamization program. The takers of the bay'ah were seen as the special group of supporters. This idea soon expanded and large scale bay'ah ceremonies became one aspect of the Islamization program. Although it has been modified in form, this aspect can be seen as the direct result of the influence of the Sufi tradition and the notable families on the current process of Islamization.

In general terms, however, the notable families have played an important but indirect role in shaping the context of the Islamization program. They have not had a major direct role as a source of the initiative for the program or as definers of its content.

### The Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood has been an Islamic force with growing influence in the Sudan in recent years. It represents a more programatic and intellectual approach to Islam than the more traditional Sudanese Islamic structures. The contrast between the Brotherhood and the Sayyid-notables-fikis is in many ways the contrast between "Islam as Ideology" and "Islam as Actors and Organizations." However, care must be taken not to exaggerate this contrast. The Brotherhood in the Sudan has personalized aspects which make it fit relatively easily into the Sudanese scene. People are quick to point out the differences in mood between the Brotherhood in the Sudan and similar organizations elsewhere. In addition, it is worth noting that many of the leaders of the Brotherhood come from notable Muslim families. Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, currently the most prominent Brotherhood leader, for example, is from a family that was already famous in the days of the Funj and still maintains an important tomb center south of Khartoum.

The Brotherhood began in the intellectual and political ferment of the 1940s. Some Sudanese established a number of small organizations working for the greater Islamization of society. Some of these were influenced by the ideas and representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. By the 1950s most of the various groupings had combined in the Muslim Brotherhood organization in the Sudan. This movement had fraternal ties with Brotherhood organizations elsewhere but was organizational independent.

The Sudanese Brotherhood did not create a separate political

party. Instead, it acted as religio-political interest group which participated in broader front organizations like the Islamic constitution front in the 1950s and the Islamic Charter Front in the 1960s. Initially the movement was small with most of its members being students or younger professionals. It found itself caught between two different poles of political attraction in the Sudan, the traditional parties with their support from the major Islamic groups in the country and the Sudanese left in both its communist and its Arab socialist forms. The latter grouping dominated student politics for some time. However, by the mid-1960s, the influence and appeal of the Brotherhood began to grow significantly. By the end of the decade it was a major force among the students and the educated professional class and in the 1970s it became the dominant force in the student bodies of all the universities in the Sudan.

In the early years of the May Revolution, the Brotherhood was part of the opposition with many of its leaders either in exile or in jail. The Brotherhood participated with the national reconciliation and Hasan al-Turabi, its leader, went from jail to being the attorney general in the cabinet. Turabi, a former dean of the law school at the University of Khartoum, also led a committee to examine Sudanese laws to determine their degree of conformity with Islam. His actions and roles in the May Revolutionary regime reflect the growing sentiments in favor of Islamization within the Sudan.

Turabi and other Muslim Brothers continue to cooperate with Numayri and work within the May Regime. This is in contrast to others, like Sayyid Sadiq al-Mahdi, who were involved in the

original reconciliation moves in 1977-1978. Turabi and most of the Brothers believe that this cooperation is resulting in the gradual and effective Islamization of Sudanese society. In an interview in 1980, Turabi described the accomplishments of this policy: "The regime is generally turning toward Islam. We are seeking to hasten the consolidation of Islam in society -- in education, politics, and the law....The consolidation of Islam in society...is slower than it should be...[but] I am personally confident of the soundness of the brother president's Islamic stance. However, he does not act alone but within a regime that comprises other elements." (JPRS 75967, 1980.)

In this situation, the Muslim Brotherhood, especially through the actions of Hasan al-Turabi and his supporters, can be seen as actively preparing the way, within government policy making circles, for a more active Islamization program. The Brotherhood program itself, however, is based on working gradually to transform society by evolutionary means. Turabi on many occasions outlined this idea of Islamization based on persuasion, coming from the people up, rather than from the top down.

The formal Islamization program initiated by Numayri in 1983 reflects a number of Brotherhood themes and ideas. However, especially in terms of methods of implementation, Numayri's program contains significant differences. The leading members of the Brotherhood support Numayri's program, arguing that because of this program it will be impossible for the Sudan to revert to a radical or quasi-secularist political approach.



From the Brotherhood's perspective, a significant program of Islamization had already been initiated in the Sudan by the late 1970s. The national reconciliation had been a major step in that process, opening the way for the Brotherhood's program of broad societal Islamization. In this context, the program of 1983-1984 was not initiated directly by the Brotherhood because theirs was already in operation.

The existence of the Brotherhood activities and their growing popularity helped to divorce the concept of an Islamic state, in practical terms, from its earlier associations in the Sudan with the traditional political parties and the Mahdists. The Brotherhood, then, provided some impetus in broad terms for the 1983 program and, through leaders like Hasan al-Turabi also provided clear encouragement to President Numayri. However, the program of 1983-1984 is different in some significant ways from the general Brotherhood program. In this way, one cannot say that it was the Brotherhood that initiated the 1983-1984 program, even though they helped create the momentum that led to the initiation of Numayri's program.

#### Numayri as the Initiator.

The Sudan's Islamization program of 1983-1984 was, in fact, initiated by President Numayri. This is true not only in the sense that he was the responsible executive but also that he appears to have been the basic source of the initiative for the particular program that was put into effect in 1983-1984.

It is important to note the necessary relationship in this conclusion between the initiator of the program and the

particular program itself. In the early 1980s, there are a number of different sources for leadership in initiating a formal program of Islamization. Each of these sources has a particular program that has distinctive characteristics. They are not always mutually exclusive, but this is sometimes the case. In the 1980s it seems clear, for example, that the Mahdist Islamization program and Numayri's program are mutually exclusive while the Brotherhood's programmatic concepts are generally complementary to the program initiated by Numayri.

To say that Numayri's program is compatible with another Islamization program does not mean that Numayri was basically acting as a front for some other Islamic elements within the country. He has the cooperation of the Muslim Brotherhood and many of the Islamic notables in his effort but he is not acting in their stead.

Under Numayri's leadership there has been, for at least a decade, a gradual movement in the direction of a more Islamic, authoritarian-populist political system. The early years of radical rhetoric and programs were relatively short. With the advantage of hindsight it is possible to see gradual shifts in policy in the direction of greater emphasis on Islam. In the mid-1970s, for example, when a military officer, Muhammad Abd al-Qadir, imposed prohibition of intoxicated beverages and gambling in the province of which he was governor, the action was not repudiated. Although there were some objections from more secularist political figures, there was little popular opposition and substantial sympathetic expression of views.

In personal terms, President Numayri also seemed to be

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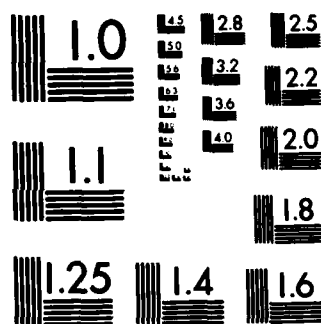
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moving in the direction of a more visibly Islamic life style. At the time his frequent visits to Islamic notables were often seen as being basically a political image-making exercise but from the perspective of the early 1980s they were probably much more than that. Similarly, the publication of Numayri's book on the Islamic path was seen more as a public relations gesture written by a press officer than as an important point in the movement toward the initiation of a formal program of Islamization in the Sudan. However, in personal terms, it appears that Numayri was becoming increasingly convinced that the Islamic path represented the best basis for Sudanese national policy.

Long term social developments helped to provide the opportunity and other groups prepared the way for public awareness of Islamization programs. The resurgence of Islam in other parts of the world gave support to this. The Sudan in general and Numayri in particular had had experience with a variety of other policy orientations, none of which had been very successful in the Sudanese context.

Under these circumstances, it was Numayri and not some alternative group that had the necessary combination of elements to bring about the initiation of the Islamization program. Numayri had the necessary intellectual or believing conviction as a result of his personal background and development. He also had the will to take the risk of initiating an Islamization program. Other programs had not worked very well and the Sudan faces many difficult problems. Finally, Numayri was in a position of sufficient power to begin the actual implementation of his own

particular program. He did not have to lead a revolution or coup before being able to do that and he was in a position of sufficient political independence rather than being a front for some other forces in the political system.

Other groups have had varying opportunities over the years but they have failed to implement Islamization programs. At times such programs were considered to be politically impractical and at other times the group's determination was not strong enough to translate ideas and discussions into actual programs. Islamization in the Sudan has frequently become tangled with the problems of partisan and "sectarian" factionalism with the result that Islamization would have been considered a victory for a particular group rather than a broader segment of the population. In the 1980s, these other groups are not full controllers of the political system nor are they in a position to lead a revolt against that system. As a result, when a formal Islamization program was initiated, it was done by Numayri rather than some other individual or group.

#### WHY THIS PROGRAM ?

Islamization takes many different forms. On one level it is a long historical process while at another level it is a specific program initiated by a particular person at a given moment in history. In the Sudan the long term evolutions involved in societal Islamization provide the context for the specific contemporary programs. In the early 1980s it was a specific program which was initiated.

In the contemporary Islamic world there are many different

Islamization programs which are being implemented. In general principles, Muslims speak of "the Islamic alternative," but in practice there are many different models and alternatives. These range from Mu'ammarr Qaddafi's Third Universal Theory to the more pragmatic and sometimes conservative programs of the fundamentalist monarchy in Saudi Arabia. It is useful to ask why President Numayri initiated this particular program in the early 1980s.

The Sudanese Islamization program is not an intellectually radical program. In some areas of the Islamic world groups have developed and advocate Islamization programs which are socially revolutionary. They utilize concepts of class struggle and speak of the necessity of the revolution of the masses. Groups like the Mujahidin in Iran have been called "Islamic Marxists" because of the ideological radicalism of some of their basic premises.

Such programs have had little appeal in the Sudan. Even the Sudanese Left has remained remarkably conservative in terms of the orientation of its approaches to and interpretations of Islam. Numayri's programmatic vocabulary involves substantial usage of the terminology and symbols of "revolutionization" (Hamid, 1983), but speeches using such symbols do so in relatively general ways, rather than using the more specific Marxian radical modes of analysis. Numayri's experience with the communists in the early days of the revolutionary period make him mistrustful of programs and people who sound too ideologically radical. As a result, the more radical type of Islamization program is not likely to be the type initiated by Numayri (or probably most other Sudanese).

Another possible alternative would be for Numayri to develop a highly idiosyncratic program based on his own personal interpretations of the fundamentals of Islam. This would be Islamization along the lines of Qaddafi's in Libya. Such a program would probably have more difficulty in the Sudan than in Libya. Qaddafi's revolution overthrew a monarchy which was based on the leading Islamic organization in Libya, the Sanusiyyah Tariqah. Modernization and the experience of independence had changed the ability of the more traditional Islamic leaders to guide or control opinion in Libya.

In the Sudan, however, the continuing strength of many of the Islamic structures and groups would make an Islamization program which divorced itself from those groups less acceptable to the general population. The strong lines of continuity within Sudanese Muslim society make it difficult for a highly individualized interpretation of Islam to gain significant support. This is illustrated by the experience of the Republican Brothers led by Mahmud Muhammad Taha. With a great deal of intellectual skill and knowledge of Islam, Mahmud Muhammad Taha has developed a major reinterpretation of the Islamic tradition. He has been active for at least four decades in preaching, writing, and publishing but has gained a relatively small following. From time to time he was jailed for disturbing the peace because his incitements to Islamic revival would cause disturbances by people who were upset by his views. His experience shows the strong resistance in the Sudan to this type of an approach to Islamic revival. Their condemnation is summed



up in the charge that Mahmud Muhammad Taha has proclaimed himself to be a new prophet, while true Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad was the last and true seal of the prophets.

In addition to these general conditions, it also appears that Numayri's own personality would resist this type of an approach. While he is given to dramatic actions and makes good use of surprises in his political strategy, Numayri is also quite disciplined in his approach to intellectual problems and shows the influence of his military background and training. He would make an unlikely Qaddafi-style Islamizer.

Programs closer to the mainstream of modern Islamic fundamentalism have a broader appeal in the Sudan. These stress the fundamentals of Islam but give some emphasis to the importance of informed, independent analysis ( ijtihad ) as opposed to simple adherence to the formulations of past scholars ( taglid ). This provides the main themes for the Islamization program defined in intellectual terms by Sadiq al-Mahdi in the early 1980s. He states:

A serious attempt at Islamizing the legal systems of Muslim countries today can only be undertaken by scholars familiar with the whole heritage of Islamic law, familiar with contemporary legal systems, familiar with contemporary social needs and problems and assisted in that by economists, sociologists, political scientists and statesmen. That workshop or think tank could base itself on the Quran and Sunna and proceed in the spirit of a new ijtihad interpretation of Islam to codify a civil, criminal, personal and international

law. ( al-Mahdi, 1983, pp. 238-239.)

An Islamization program of this nature has substantial appeal to intellectuals in the Sudan and elsewhere. It is not, however, the type of program introduced by Numayri. While Numayri might feel that careful study has benefits, people who worked with him at the time of the initiation of the Islamization program in the Sudan stress that the president felt that the introduction of the program had to be relatively dramatic and sudden if it was to succeed. He believes that committees and long deliberations open the way for compromises and political pressures even before the program is begun. A dramatic and full initial commitment to a program of Islamization without a suggestion of hesitation was what Numayri believed was necessary for the successful implementation of Islamization. As a result, he did not adopt the think tank / iitihad approach.

This also helps to explain why Numayri did not simply throw his influences and resources behind the Muslim Brotherhood program or a program like it. The heart of the program advocated by the Brotherhood is the careful conversion of people or the revival of their strict adherence to the faith and the evolutionary transformation of society as a whole. In 1980, for example, Hasan al-Turabi stated, "Our objective is not to gain power but to consolidate Islamic principles in private and public life." ( JPRS 75967, 1980. )

The Brotherhood also stresses the need for iitihad with emphasis on consideration of underlying general principles rather than programatic details. Turabi again represents the Sudanese

Brotherhood attitude on this when he writes:

an awareness of the general nature and features of the Islamic state is necessary for an understanding of modern Islam as a resurgent force seeking to make up for a failure to realize Islam fully. Muslims are presently focusing more on general ideals -- ideals as standards for guiding their different attempts to implement Islam. (Turabi, 1983, pp. 250-251.)

While the Brotherhood program is not contradictory to Numayri's program in practice, it does represent a different style and approach. Numayri's conviction that rapid action is necessary and that long deliberations of underlying principles creates unnecessary details provide perhaps the basic reason why the program initiated in 1983-1984 is not closer in style to that of the Brotherhood.

The program that was actually implemented in 1983-1984 is an intellectually conservative program. There is little conscious or articulated effort of ijtihad as is frequently found in fundamentalist programs. Instead, the program is closer in mood to the more classical efforts of taglid. It takes already established definitions and formulations and works to implement them directly. Those responsible for the formulation and promulgation of the laws resulting from the initiation of Islamization describe the process as being one primarily of searching for already established presentations rather than an independent, informed analysis of the fundamental principles. Flexibility was in terms of choosing among the available alternatives found in the existing Islamic legal works rather

than developing new formulations basic on the "fundamentals." In this sense, the program is not strictly speaking a fundamentalist one.

One major exception to this is in the development of Islamic economics. Before the initiation of the program there was a successful effort to establish Islamic banking in the Sudan. This activity was largely extra-governmental and Islamic banking in the Sudan has taken many pioneering steps. Governmental Islamization supported these efforts by the development of appropriate laws but much of the effort has been in the non-governmental sector.

The particular program reflects its initiator. Numayri's military background and general experience appears to have given him an appreciation of the direct approach. It is an article of faith that Islamic law already exists, is universally applicable, and simply awaits implementation. Intellectual deliberations may be helpful on details from this perspective but they may, in fact, delay the desired implementation.

The benefits of a sudden and complete implementation are many, in this view. It provides the general population with the assurance that the government is committed to Islamization. Many people in the Islamic world, for example, talk about the effectiveness of amputation as a punishment for theft but it required an actual amputation for many people in the Sudan to be persuaded that the government would really implement Islamic law rigorously and fully.

Numayri's Islamization program is intellectually

conservative but, in its starkness, it is revolutionary in social and political terms. It is supported by many long term developments in Islamic society but, at the same time, it represents a dramatic leadership initiative by Numayri.

"This particular program" has been implemented because it reflects the mood and style of the leader who set it in motion. One might call this program "Islamization in the military mode", just as one might think of current developments in Iran as "Islamization in the mullah mode."

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